

Wanganui Chronicle



Location: 20 Drews Ave / 2 Rutland St **Heritage NZ Pouhere Taonga**

List Number: nil

Physical Description: Four storey concrete and masonry building, the brickwork is exposed on the top two floors. An octagonal drum and dome over the corner entrance have been removed.

Other known names:

Current Use:

Former Uses: Offices of the Wanganui Chronicle

Heritage Status: **District Plan Class: Class B, 2013,** in Old Town Conservation Area

Architectural Style: Edwardian **Date of Construction:** 1912 (Chronicle Office); 1951 (Chronicle Palazzo Glass Studio).

Materials: Cement render, brickwork, timber joinery

Registered owner: Ross Mitchell Anyon & Gail Hickman

Register Item Number:

399

Building Type:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Recreation
- Institutional
- Agriculture
- Other

Significance:

- Archaeological
- Architectural
- Historic
- Scientific
- Technological
- Cultural

Thematic Context

- Early Settlement
- Residential
- Industry
- Agricultural
- Commerce
- Transport
- Civic/Admin
- Health
- Education
- Religion
- Recreation
- Community
- Memorials
- Military

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Legal Description: Pt Section 79 Town of Wanganui; Pt Lot 3 DP 4572

History: The site was initially occupied by Thomas Bamber and his family who lived in a house on Town Section 79 from the 1850s up to Bamber's death in 1915. Bamber was a blacksmith and his forge was also on the section where the Wanganui Chronicle building now stands. Bamber was Mayor of Wanganui from 1878 to 1880. Mr. Bamber was both a Mason and an Oddfellow. He joined the Wanganui lodge at an early stage in the lodge's history.

The history of the site as described by Campbell *et al* (2009:7; 21): Town Section 79 was occupied by a number of occupants, mainly associated with the Phoenix Hotel and the boarding house that subsequently replaced it. The Phoenix Hotel was renamed the Occidental Hotel in 1879. It was located on the corner of Campbell Place (Rutland Street) and Wicksteed Street (Drews Avenue) on Section 79 and the building was present until at least 1866. It had several proprietors throughout the 1860s and 1870s and it appears that by the 1890s or early 1900s, the hotel was replaced by another building that was run as a boarding house. The boarding house also had several proprietors until 1911, when it was pulled down to make way for the Wanganui Chronicle offices, built in 1912 and still remains on the site today.

Bamber held leasehold on the section from 1858, though what buildings he had there is not noted until the 1870s when valuation rolls records show him having a six-roomed dwelling and a smithy. A 1908 insurance plan of the block shows Bamber's black smith forge adjacent to the house on the south side, where the Chronicle Glass Studio (built 1951) now stands. Any archaeological evidence of the forge is unlikely to survive as the glass studio has a deep basement.

Campbell *et al*'s (2009) history of the site where the Wanganui Chronicle building now stands is different to the history presented by Smart and Bates's (1972:18) who describe the early history of the site as:

"John Foster Kells, an ex sergeant of the 65th Regiment converted his residence on the corner of Wecksteed (sic) Place and Campbell Place into the York Hotel. The Wanganui Chronicle building now occupies this site. The actual date on which this hotel was opened was towards the end of 1851 or early in 1852. The York Hotel became very popular with the settlers and was the meeting place for some of the early societies. Sergeant Kells found his hotel inadequate to cope with the increase of the

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business, and in 1857 built a new hotel of the same name facing the river on Taupo Quay. It was later burnt down and rebuilt as the Steam Packet Hotel, at the time the largest three-story building in Wanganui. Later it was rebuilt several times and still stands today as Foster's Hotel" (Smart and Bates 1972:18).

In more recent history; in 2005, the Wanganui Chronicle reported on the story of how the Palmerston North based polytechnic UCOL wished to purchase the Wanganui's Old Town precinct to turn into the Whanganui UCOL campus. At that stage, no agreement has been reached on the retention of the Wanganui Chronicle Building. One of the setbacks is that the owner of the former Wanganui Chronicle building, Ross Mitchell-Anyon has made it clear he would be happy to sell to UCOL provided several criteria were met including that the building is not bulldozed. As at February 2012, the property is still currently owned by Ross Mitchell-Anyon and is being used by the Chronicle Glass Studio and Gallery.

In 2006, the Wanganui Chronicle reported that a resource consent application for Whanganui UCOL's campus development proposal for Wanganui's Old Town's area was being considered by the Wanganui District Council's planning department. The application was for the area bounded by Taupo Quay, Drews Ave, Rutland St and Market Pl. The site includes all properties in the block except for those on the corner of Rutland St and Drews Ave (the Chinese laundry and the Old Chronicle Building) and the former Public Trust building on the corner of Rutland St and Market Pl.

Following this, in 2006, archaeological investigations at the Bamber House and Wanganui Hotel sites (Town Sections 79 and 77), as part of the UCOL Whanganui Converge redevelopment, Wanganui. The archaeological investigations were directed by Matthew Campbell of CFG. They excavated the properties surrounding the Chinese laundry and the Old Chronicle Building, and found the foundations of pre 1900 structures and several artefacts (Campbell et al 2009). The excavations did not occur where the Wanganui Chronicle Building now stands, but in the surrounding properties.

The architect for the Chronicle building was T.H. Battle; The bricklayer was J. Jones and the woodwork was undertaken by W. Knuckey (Cochran et al 1990).

Wanganui Chronicle

Wanganui was the first town within Wellington's extended region to have its own newspaper. The Wanganui Record was a weekly newspaper first published by Francis H. Watts in 1863, but only lasted a few weeks. The Wanganui Chronicle first started in 1856 by a local resident, Henry Stokes. At the time, there was no newspaper plant in the town and they had to go further afield in search of one. In 1956, the Wanganui Chronicle celebrated its centenary. It is the second oldest paper in New Zealand, with the oldest being the Taranaki Herald. During the paper's 155 year history, it occupied the building at Drew's Ave for only part of that time.

Architect

The architect of this building was Thomas Henry Battle. He was a builder and contractor by training. Born in London, he left in 1874 on the ship "Conflict," arriving in Wellington the same year, and settled in Wanganui in 1875. Mr. Battle trained as a cabinetmaker in Wanganui, completing his apprenticeship in 1880. Soon after, he turned his attention to the building line and built several churches up the river. His various works include the Bank of Australasia building at Stratford, the house of Mr. F. McBeth at Kiwitea, and the large house of Mr. G. Parker in Victoria Avenue for Mr. G. Parker. He was a member of the Volunteer Fire Brigade, and occupied the position of foreman No. 1 for several years (The Cyclopedia of New Zealand 1897).

Architect/Designer: T. H. Battle (Glass Studio – R.G. Talboys & Assoc.)

History of changes:

Date Period: 1910s

Rarity / Special Features:

Integrity: From a cursory visual inspection for the purposes of this study, the building appears in fair condition.

Representativeness: The building is representative of the Edwardian Palazzo style.

Context/Group Value: The building is one of a number of significant heritage buildings with the OTCOZ.

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Diversity (Form and Features):

Fragility / Vulnerability: Being a concrete building, it is potentially at risk from earthquake damage.

Summary of Significance:

Archaeological Qualities

As there have been buildings on this site prior to 1900, its location is deemed to be an archaeological site.

Architectural Qualities

The building is a typical example of the Italianate commercial style, which was a part of the classical revival of the nineteenth century, which was championed by Sir Charles Barry from the 1840's in his design of clubs and smaller office buildings. His preferred style was the sixteenth century Italian Palazzo and he was also influential in using this style for large country houses for the wealthy. Commercial buildings, particularly banks, preferred the use of classical architecture, and the design of C R Cockerell's Sun Fire and Life Assurance building of 1839-42 in Threadneedle Street confirmed the Italianate Palazzo style. The design of larger structures using classical language was easily solved using the Palazzo style and quickly saw warehouses and multi-storey offices and other buildings adopt the Italianate Palazzo style. Architects such as Edward Walters, J E Gegan, Edward l'Anson, and John Gibson, popularised the style in England while Scottish architects also took up the style with gusto. The High Victorian period saw additional classical styles such as the French renaissance become a significant style, however the popularity of the Italianate Palazzo style for commercial buildings was maintained until the Edwardian period, when the style evolved into the Inter-war Commercial Palazzo style. This was developed by American architects McKim, Mead and White initially for Chicago high-rise commercial buildings, and this style became popular throughout the 'New World'.

The building has the typical characteristics of the style including round-headed windows, rusticated base, pilasters, the facades broken into bays, cornice and parapet.

Historic Qualities

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The building is associated with the Wanganui Chronicle, started in 1856 and it is the second oldest paper in New Zealand, with the oldest being the Taranaki Herald.

It is also associated with professionals involved with its design and construction including locally significant architect T H Battle.

Technical Qualities

The building is constructed using materials and construction techniques typical of the period.

Cultural Qualities

As a former location of the Wanganui Chronicle, the building may have sentimental qualities for its readers.

Reference Source:

Bryan, M. 2006. UCOL seeks resource consent for Old Town project. *Wanganui Chronicle*. May 15, 2006.

Campbell, M., Gumbley, W., and Hudson, B. 2009. *Archaeological investigations at the Bamber House and Wanganui Hotel sites (Town Sections 79 and 77), UCOL Whanganui Converge redevelopment, Wanganui*. Report to The New Zealand Historic Places Trust and The Universal College of Learning.

Cochran, C. and Murray North Limited. 1990. *Wanganui Heritage Study*. Volume II. Register. For the Wanganui District Council. # 5-1.

Cyclopedia Company Limited. 1897. *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand [Wellington Provincial District]: Professional, Commercial And Industrial*. Wellington: The Cyclopedia Company Limited. [Online] Available from: <http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc01Cycl-t1-body-d4-d172-d25.html#Cyc01Cycl-fig-Cyc01Cycl1412b> [Accessed 17h January 2012].

Smart, M.J.G. and Bates, A.P. *The Wanganui Story*. Wanganui: Wanganui Newspapers Ltd

Wanganui Chronicle. 2006. UCOL not fazed by setbacks. *Wanganui Chronicle*. Wednesday, November 9, 2005. [Online] Available from:

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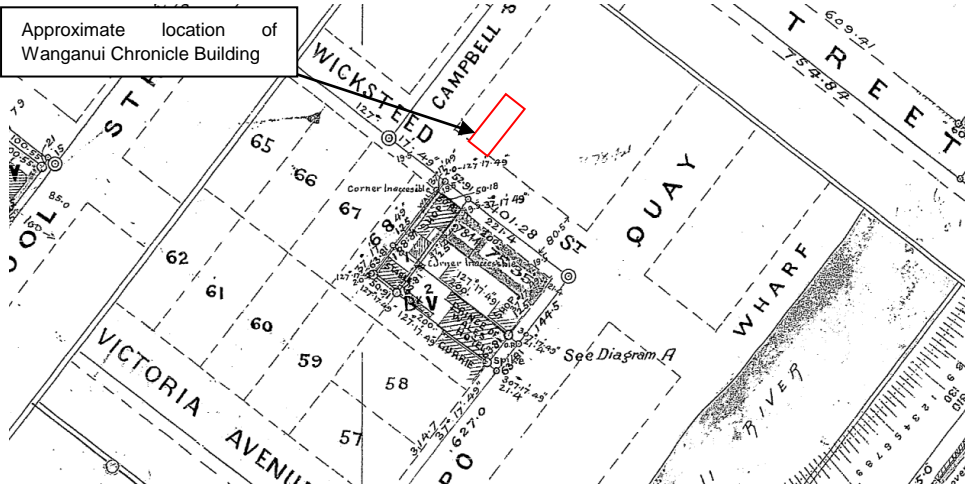


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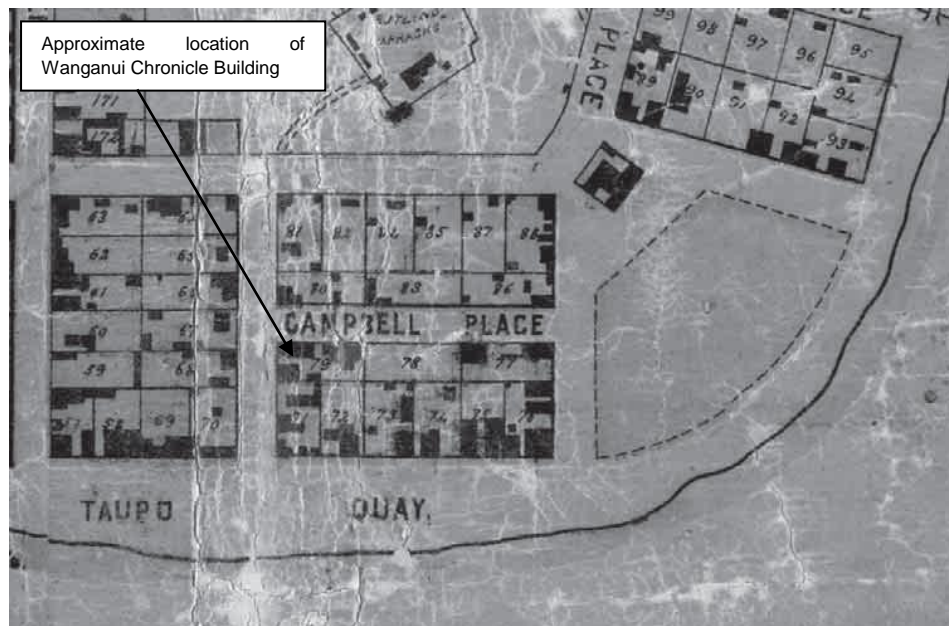
<http://www.wanganuichronicle.co.nz/news/ucol-not-fazed-by-setbacks/953297/>

[Accessed 17th January 2012].

Associated Pictures:



Section of Survey Plan 936 drawn in 1889 showing approximate location of site.

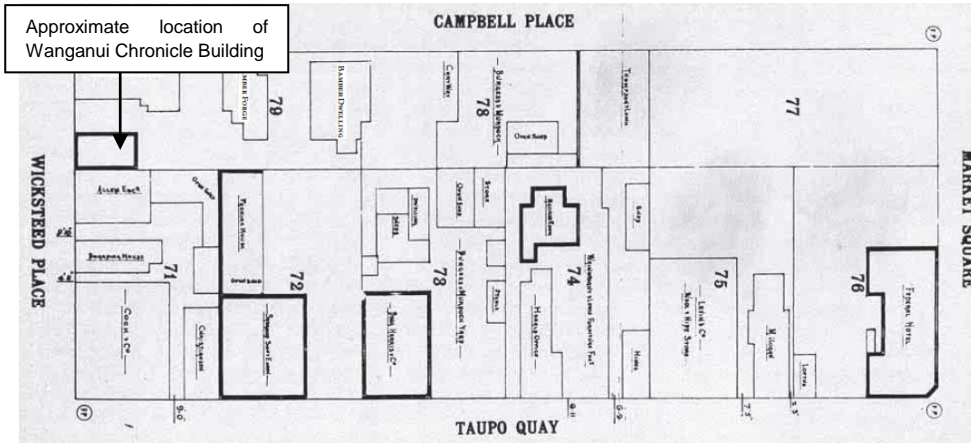


Detail from an 1860s map of Wanganui showing outlines of buildings on TS 77
(Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington).

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A 1908 Insurance plan shows the approximate location of the TS 79 (Wanganui Public Library).

Date of Survey: 2012

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