

HISTORIC WHITESTONE ARCHITECTURE OF ŌAMARU & WAITAKI DISTRICT

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FORRESTER GALLERY

Thames Street

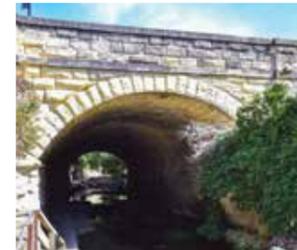
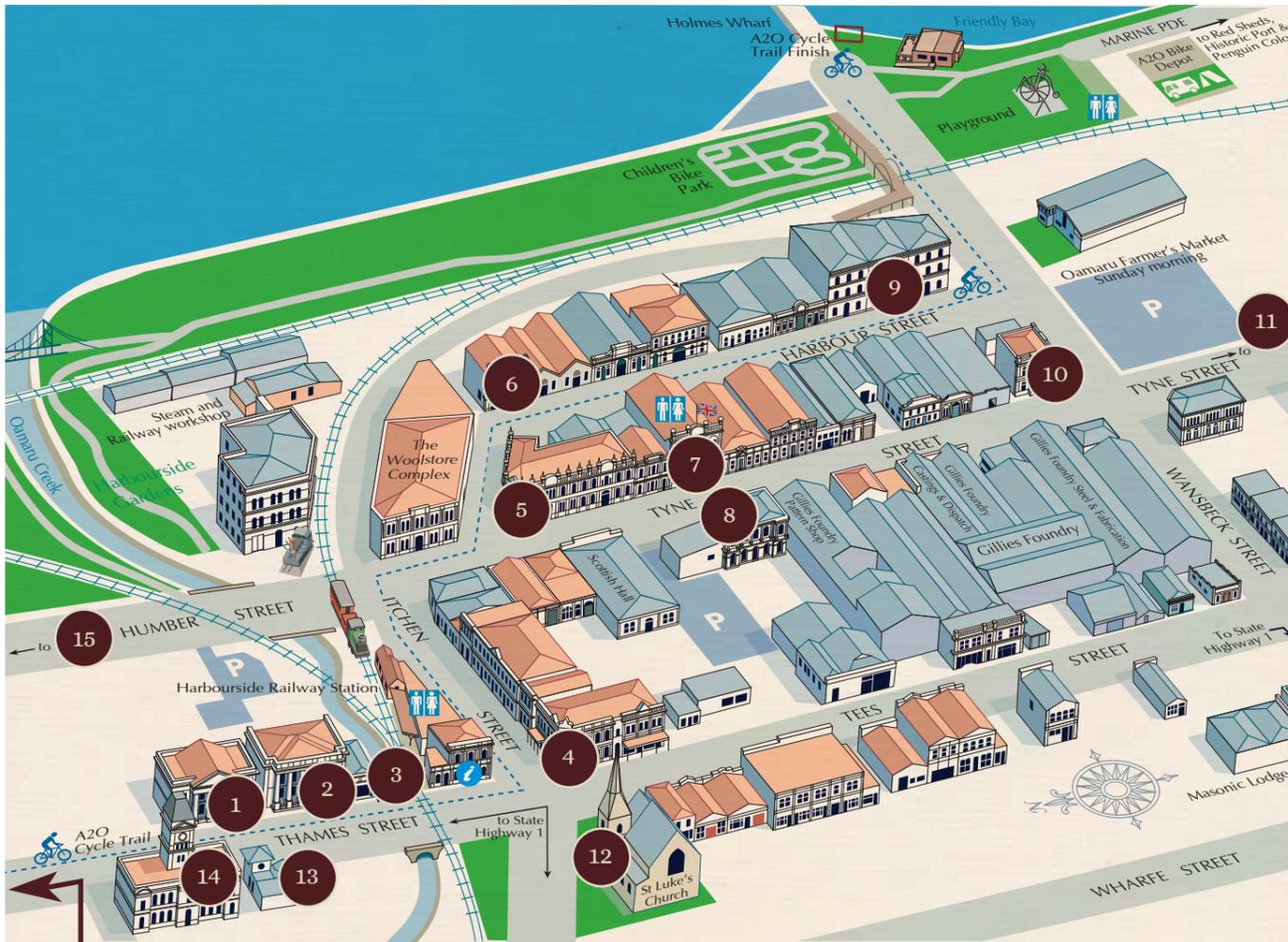


ANZ BANK

Thames Street

This former Bank of New South Wales was built at a time of rapid growth in Ōamaru. Designed by Dunedin architect Robert Lawson in 1883, the building forms a handsome pair in limestone with its equally imposing neighbour, the ANZ Bank. Both have luxuriant acanthus leaves on the capitals of their Corinthian columns. The building was sympathetically converted to an art gallery in 1983.

Originally built for the Bank of Otago in 1871, this elegant and dignified building was, like its neighbour, the Forrester Gallery, designed by Robert Lawson. The Bank of Otago, founded in 1863, was absorbed by the National Bank in 1875.



THAMES STREET BRIDGE

Thames Street



AMP BUILDING

Corner Itchen and Tees St.

The central portion of this stone bridge over Ōamaru Creek was constructed in 1861 to link the old town centre with Thames Street in the north. Originally only 5.5 metres wide, the bridge was widened to its present width of 40.24 metres in 1876. Until 1932, when the Sydney Harbour Bridge opened, it held the distinction of being the widest bridge in the southern hemisphere.

Now upstairs the home of its owner the North Otago Club, this building was originally designed by Forrester and Lemon for Hood and Shennan's Drapery in 1874. In 1886 it was remodelled for the AMP Society. The marble Amicus statue at roofline is thought to be the only original AMP insignia remaining in situ in New Zealand.

IN THIS DIRECTION YOU CAN FIND THE FOLLOWING BUILDINGS 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 ←



CRITERION HOTEL

Tyne Street

Built in 1877, this hotel building was designed in the Victorian Italianate style by Ōamaru architects, Forrester and Lemon. The hotel was closed when the district went "dry" in 1906, the bar reopening for business in 1998. The building is now administered by the Ōamaru Whitestone Civic Trust, formed in 1989 to purchase, restore and administer buildings in the old town area.



HARBOUR BOARD OFFICE

Harbour Street

This former Harbour Board office, built in 1876, is one of the first public buildings designed by Ōamaru architects, Forrester and Lemon. Heavily ornamented, the building was designed in the Venetian Renaissance style. It is now the Headquarters of the Ōamaru Whitestone Civic Trust.



SMITH'S GRAIN STORE

Tyne Street

Built in 1881-2 by James Johnston, a stone mason and main rival to architects Forrester and Lemon, this former grain store is probably the most ornamental grain store in the country. In its heyday it could hold some 30,000 sacks of grain. Between 1906-1970, the building was occupied by the Ōamaru Mail.



UNION BANK

Tyne Street

This former Union Bank of Australia was designed by Forrester and Lemon and built 1878-9. It is one of the earliest examples of the Venetian palazzo style of commercial architecture in New Zealand. The Union Bank was the forerunner of the ANZ Bank. Today the building echoes with the activities of the Ōamaru Squash and Badminton Club.



NZ LOAN AND MERCANTILE WAREHOUSE

Harbour Street

Built in 1882, to the design of Dennison and Grant, this elegantly detailed, three storey Victorian warehouse was built for NZ Loan and Mercantile when it was the largest stock and station agency in New Zealand. The building was designed to hold 100,000 sacks of grain handled by four grain lifts.



CUSTOMS HOUSE

Tyne Street

Now the home of the North Otago Art Society, this former Customs House has had many varied uses over the years. For a time it served the Waitaki County Council and later the Buffalo Lodge. It was designed in 1883 by Forrester and Lemon.



ŌAMARU HARBOUR

Ōamaru Harbour

This Victorian/Edwardian deep water port survives in a relatively intact and unchanged state, representative of a site type that has generally disappeared. Its key component, Sumpter Wharf, was constructed in 1884 specifically for the refrigerated steamers designed to run between New Zealand and Britain.



ST LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Corner Itchen and Tees Streets

The first part of this prominent church, the south end of the nave, was built as early as 1866, followed by the rest of the nave in 1876, the spire and chancel in 1913 and the West porch in 1922. Rumsey and Jackson designed the earlier portions; J.M. Forrester the remainder. The woodcarving in the church is the work of English-trained carver F. G. Gumsey.



FIRST POST OFFICE

Thames Street

Now a restaurant, this former post office, built in 1864 is now Ōamaru's oldest surviving public building. It is the only known example of architect W. H. Clayton's work remaining in the town and differs from its more elaborate neighbour, the second post office, which replaced it in 1884. The circular openings in the tower were for a clock which was never installed.



FORMER POST OFFICE

Thames Street

Now the home of the Waitaki District Council, this elegant essay in limestone was designed by Forrester and Lemon in 1883, but without its clocktower. It was Thomas Forrester's son John, who saw to the addition of the 28 metre high tower in 1903. The clock was donated by St John Buckley, as a memorial to his uncle, the Hon. John McLean.



RAILWAY STATION

Humber Street

This wooden building was designed by George Troup in 1900. It was Ōamaru's second station and typified the town's move north from Tyne St. Its 700 seat dining room was the largest in the South Island. At the station's peak, eight passenger trains with over 5000 people passed through it in a single day. The passenger service closed in 2002.



NORTH OTAGO MUSEUM 16
Thames Street

Designed by Forrester and Lemon, this handsome structure began its life in 1882 as the Ōamaru Athenaeum (a subscription library) and Mechanics Institute. It replaced an earlier athenaeum, circa 1867, on the same site. When the new public library was built, the building became a museum and archive to serve the district.



OPERA HOUSE 17
Thames Street

The Ōamaru Opera House, completed to architect J.M.Forrester's design by local contractors H.Winsley and Son (costing some £10,600), opened on 7 October 1907. The Ōamaru limestone building worked as a council base, and later law offices. The Opera House in its rich history has hosted every type of civic function as well as theatre, ballet, concerts, cinema and boxing.



COURTHOUSE 18
Thames Street

Arguably the finest building by the prolific local architectural partnership of Forrester and Lemon, the Ōamaru courthouse was built 1882-3, superseding an earlier courthouse to the south. The well - proportioned classical design reflects the influence of Palladian architecture. Supreme Court sittings were held here until 1931. The building is still used for regular District Court sittings.



ST PATRICK'S BASILICA 19
Reed Street

This magnificent Catholic church building was designed by Dunedin architect F.W. Petre, well-known throughout the South Island for his church architecture. Like a number of large churches, St Patrick's was built in various stages, the first in 1893 and the last in 1918. The interior with its coffered Renaissance ceiling and great dome over the sanctuary is well worth inspection.



ST PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 20
Coquet Street

This fine church building rose in 1875 on the foundations of an earlier church designed by Dunedin architect William Mason in 1864. Described as "unorthodox", the earlier building was not favoured by the parish and was torn down. The new St Paul's was designed by Forrester and Lemon and opened in February, 1876.



WAITAKI GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL 21
Trent Street

Established in 1887, Waitaki Girls today occupies a largely modern complex of buildings. Still dominating the Thames Street frontage, however, is the former junior school, which opened in 1928 to the design of Forrester and Steenson. Well-known novelist Janet Frame started here in 1935. Since the closing of the junior school in 1962, the building has been used as classrooms and for administration.



WAITAKI BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL 22
Waitaki Avenue

Like many other schools, Waitaki Boys' grew as needs arose, but in this case, in the best English public school tradition, with additions following the original style. The first part was built 1883, followed by additions in 1905 and 1912 to designs by Forrester and Lemon. Dominating the quadrangle behind is the neo-Tudor Hall of Memories, designed by John Forrester and completed in 1927.



ST KEVIN'S COLLEGE 23
Taward Street

This Catholic co-educational school was founded on the property known as Redcastle in 1927. The property had been that of the Hon. John McLean, a well-known run holder and benefactor. When his nephew, St John Buckley inherited the property in 1902, he built a large brick house with limestone facings. This has since become the Christian Brothers' residence.

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TAKE A JOURNEY TO
WAITAKI
&
ŌAMARU

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HISTORIC PLACES IN WAITAKI



TOTARA ESTATE
State Highway
8km south of Ōamaru

These restored limestone farm buildings were where sheep were slaughtered and processed for the first export of frozen meat to the United Kingdom in 1882. The buildings contain displays on the history of the meat industry. They are managed by the Historic Places Trust.



CLARKS MILL
State Highway 1 Maheno

The only surviving water-powered flour mill in New Zealand with much of its machinery intact, this limestone mill was built in 1866-7 for the then owners of Totara Estate. After 1901, it was run by the Clark family, who updated some of the machinery and later converted the mill to electricity. It is now owned by the NZ Historic Places Trust.



STANLEY'S HOTEL
Macraes

"While I Live I'll Crow" was Thomas Stanley's motto when he took up his licence in 1882 at the height of the goldrush in the district. Along with the proprietor's motto, the schist stone hotel, built by one John Budge, who is said to have been paid for his services in ale, survives to serve another generation of goldseekers.



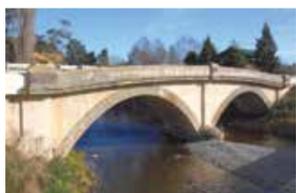
KURIHEKA STABLES
8 kms inland from Maheno

The basic plan for these handsome limestone stables is said to have come from Dresden – hence their Germanic Gothic styling. They were built 1889 for Colonel J. C. Nichols, who bought Kuriheka Station in 1885. Colonel Nichols was a noted collector of field guns, some of which can be seen from the road near the stables.



ST MARTIN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
Highway 83, Duntroon

Designed by Christchurch architect Thomas Cane, who had formerly worked for the celebrated London architect Sir Gilbert Scott, this handsome Gothic revival structure was built of locally quarried limestone in 1901. Both St Martin's and its vicarage in Kurow were built as the result of a generous bequest on the death of Mrs Emily Campbell of nearby Campbell Park.



WAIANAKARUA BRIDGE
State Highway 1 Waianakarua

An example of the work of John Turnbull Thomson, chief surveyor for the Otago Provincial Government, this twin-arched limestone bridge was constructed in 1874. Widened and strengthened during 2004-5, it is one of the oldest bridges still in use on a main state highway. The bridge is best viewed from the grounds of the adjacent Mill-House.



CAMPBELL PARK HOMESTEAD
Highway 83, Otekaieke

Built 1876-9 for major sheep baron Robert Campbell, this mansion was designed by Dunedin architect N.Y.A. Wales. The limestone for the building was quarried on site and the roof slates are from near Herbert. During the 20th Century, the homestead was used as a special Government school for boys. Today it is again privately owned. Viewing is from the public road only.



ST ALBAN'S CHAPEL AND VICARAGE ANGLICAN CHURCH
Highway 83, Kurow

A disagreement over where the Waitaki Valley's Anglican parish centre should be sited, resulted in this commodious vicarage, with small adjoining chapel in Kurow and the main church in Duntroon. Designed by John Forrester, the vicarage and chapel was built of locally quarried limestone, circa 1892-4.

A LEGACY IN LIMESTONE

Within 25 years of the first European dwelling of cabbage trees and clay being built in 1853, Ōamaru had risen to become not only the country's ninth largest town, but also reputedly "the best built in New Zealand".

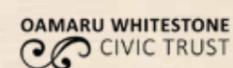
The discovery of an excellent building material, limestone, contributed to the young town's early appearance of permanence and stability. Because the stone was easily carved and moulded, architects and stonemasons revelled in the creation of the then fashionable classic forms of architecture. Their skills, aided by the general prosperity of the time, have given Ōamaru some of the finest 19th Century streetscapes one could hope to find in New Zealand today.

Ōamaru has traditionally been a servicing centre for the farms and estates of the interior. At Totara, just south of Ōamaru, sheep for New Zealand's first shipment of frozen mutton to the United Kingdom were killed and processed.

Because the port played an important role in the handling of imports and exports, the harbour area was understandably developed first. Here, creamy white limestone hotels, banks and offices rose alongside equally well-designed and proportioned grain and wool stores and warehouses.

The widening of the Thames Street bridge over the Ōamaru creek then enabled the commercial area to spread along Thames Street. With the development of the northern end of the town, "The Whitestone City", as Ōamaru soon became known, continued to expand.

This shift of commerce, together with the closure of the Port of Ōamaru in the 1970s, has been fortuitous for the town's 19th Century heritage. It has allowed the area to remain largely intact...poised, if you like, to greet an era of renewed appreciation.



www.oumaruwhitestonecivictrust.org.nz



www.tohuwhenua.nz



www.whitestonegeopark.nz



www.waitakinz.com

The buildings in this leaflet have been registered by the NZ Historic Places Trust for their historical and/or cultural heritage significance or value. As many are privately owned, viewing is from the street only, unless otherwise stated.