

RESEARCH PROJECT 'STRATHCONA' 35 SEAVIEW ROAD, REMUERA



Figure 1: North and partial west elevations of 35 Seaview Road (L. Esler collection).

Background

The Heritage Studio Limited was commissioned by Mr Lindsay Esler to undertake research and document the history of his home and the land upon which it was built. Formerly known as 'Strathcona', the property is located at 35 Seaview Road, Remuera.

The subject building is a single-storey, single-bay villa that occupies a rear lot along Seaview Road. Orientated north to face the harbour, the dwelling is of timber construction with a corrugated metal roof. To its rear (south) is a single-storey secondary dwelling, known as the 'cottage'.

Research involved viewing online repositories such as DigitalNZ, Papers Past and Auckland Libraries resources; sourcing available information at Auckland Council Archives and at Auckland Libraries Research Centre; and viewing early deeds indexes held at Archives New Zealand and certificates of title and deposit plans from Land Information New Zealand. More focussed research was carried out to establish the origins of the cottage, with access to Auckland Museum Archives and contact made with St Cuthbert's College Archives.

Access onto the site and inside the principal residence was made on 2 July 2021 during which time construction works were underway.

The history has been compiled as a 'story' with associated images and references included. Please note that copyright permissions have not been gained for the

reproduction of the historic images.

The 'Story'

Early land use and ownership (1847-1899)

The villa at present-day 35 Seaview Road was built on part of original **Allotment 16** of Section 14 of the Suburbs of Auckland – a four-acre allotment on the eastern side of Seaview Road. The allotment originally formed part of the 'Te Tiki' blocks I and IIⁱ, areas of land on Remuera's northern slopes that were purchased from Ngāti Whātua by the Crown in 1847 and were the first to be offered at auction.ⁱⁱ Ranging from four to six acres, the lots were tendered at an upset price of £10 an acre, but with such a high level of interest and fierce competition from buyers, purchase prices ended up achieving well in excess of the reserve.ⁱⁱⁱ

One of the early purchasers of this land was Major (later Lieutenant-Colonel) Henry Matson who, on 5 June 1851, was issued the Crown Grant for over 43 acres of Section 14, which included allotments 4, 7, 6, 10, 14, 9, 13 and 16 – substantial tracts of land located either side of Hobson Bay (now Bassett) Road and on the eastern side of Seaview¹ Road (Figure 2).^{iv} The purchase was supported by a deed of mortgage for £300.^v By the end of 1852, Matson had purchased a further 13 acres of land comprising allotments 5 and 8 from Robert Kelly and Charles Harvey respectively.^{vi}

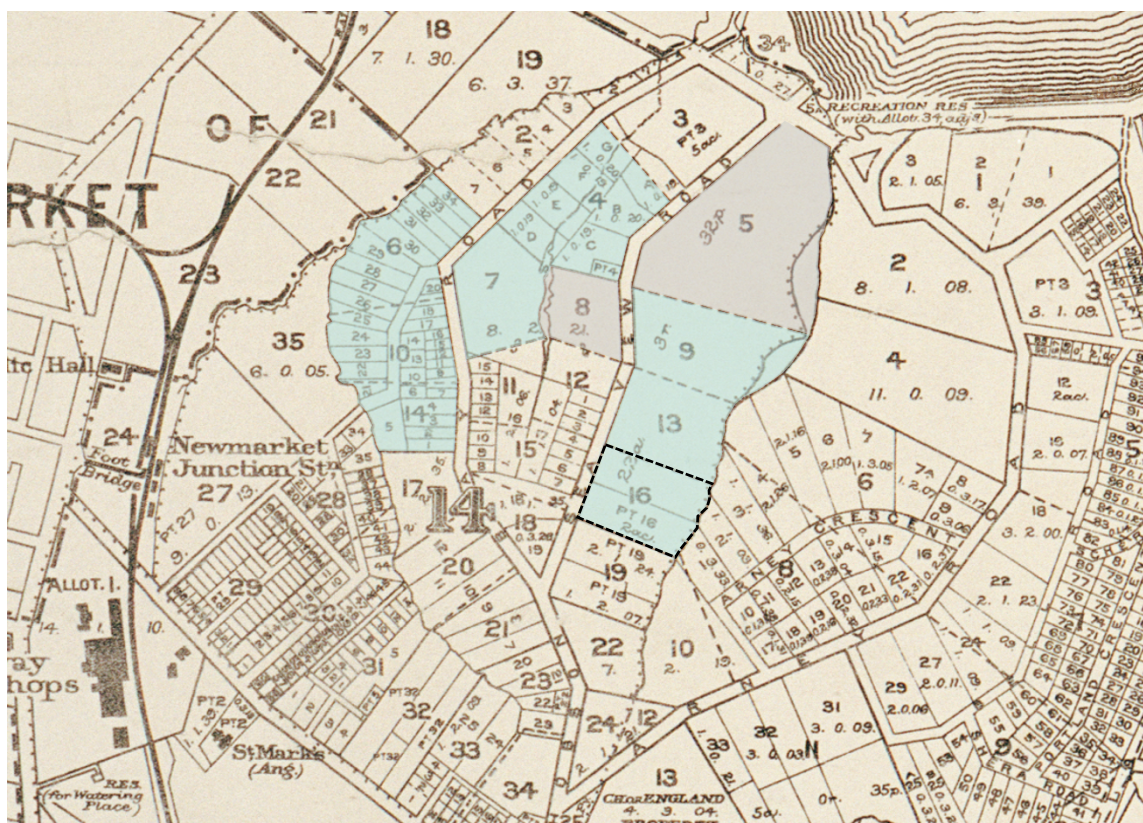


Figure 2: Showing the Remuera Crown Grant allotments acquired by Henry Matson in 1851 (highlighted teal) and the allotments purchased in 1851-52 (highlighted grey). Allotment 16 (dashed outline) is the land upon which 35 Seaview Road was later built (extract of NZ Map 4658, Auckland Libraries Heritage

¹ Originally spelt 'Sea View Road'.

Collections).

Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Matson (c.1788-1867)

Born around 1788, Henry Matson first entered service in 1811, serving in the Yeomanry Cavalry in Sussex, England and then as junior officer in the East Kent Militia.^{vii} Following stints in Ireland, North America and Jamaica, Matson travelled to Sydney in 1840.^{viii} From there he commanded the first detachment of the 58th Regiment in H. M.'s 'North Star', which arrived in Auckland in 1845, and became the first field officer appointed to the Auckland Militia.^{ix} Two years later, Matson was appointed Commissioner of Crown Lands for the investigation of land claims during Sir George Grey's governorship.^x

During his time stationed in Auckland, Matson married Isabel Caroline Louisa Emily de Thierry (c.1828-1850), the New York-born daughter of adventurer, Baron Charles de Thierry².^{xi} They set up home in Parnell (Figure 3), where Matson would remain until his death in 1867.^{xii}



Figure 3: (Left) A painting (attributed to Henry James Warre) showing a view of Parnell from the Parnell entrance to the Auckland Domain, c.1850s. Major Matson's residence 'Brookside' stands on the corner of Birdwood Crescent and Parnell Road. (Right) A close-up of 'Brookside' (B-061-006, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington).

Given his long-term residence in Parnell, Matson's acquisition of the Remuera land in the early 1850s was likely undertaken as an investment – a common occurrence during the early years of land sales in the suburb. Like other astute investors in land on Remuera's desirable northern slopes, Matson made a substantial profit on his purchase. In 1855, he sold around 25 acres (comprising allotments 5, 9, 13 and 16) to auctioneer, Alfred Buckland for £750 – more than double what he paid for twice the amount of land four years earlier.^{xiii}

² Baron Charles Philippe Hippolyte de Thierry (1793-1864) first arrived in New Zealand in 1835 and attempted to establish a sovereign state prior to the Treaty of Waitangi.

Alfred Buckland (1825-1903)

Alfred Buckland (Figure 4) was born in Newton Abbot, Devon, England in 1825, the fifth son of John and Elizabeth (nee. Mortimore) Buckland.^{xiv} In 1850, he and his first wife³, Eliza Wallen (1825-1866) immigrated to New Zealand. Following their arrival in Auckland, Buckland started farming near Mangere and, in 1855, entered into a livestock auctioneering business with Joseph Newman. The partnership was short-lived, however, with Buckland setting up his own business (later known as 'Alfred Buckland and Sons'⁴) the following year and establishing a premises at the Haymarket in the centre of Auckland city.^{xv}

With knowledge of farming and connections in the wool trade, Buckland built a thriving and lucrative enterprise. In 1858, he conducted the first public wool sale in New Zealand and subsequently established saleyards in several towns across the province.^{xvi} The success of his business enabled Buckland to construct a grand residence in 1863 for himself and his growing family⁵. Built on a rise that overlooked the then fledgling township of Newmarket and set within extensive gardens, 'Highwic' (Figure 5) still stands today and is regarded as one of New Zealand's finest Carpenter Gothic houses.^{xvii}

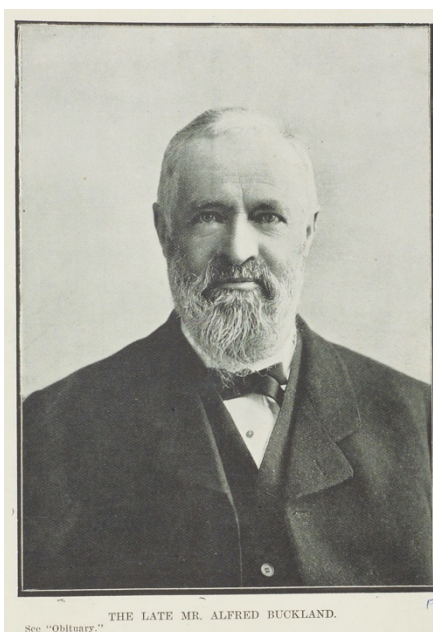


Figure 4: (Left) Alfred Buckland (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections NZG-19030620-1737-1).

Figure 5: (Above) 'Highwic' in the 1860s (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 1656-033).

The acquisition of 25 acres along Seaview Road in 1855 represented an early land purchase for Buckland, who would go on to invest in agricultural land in Waikato, Awhitu and on the Kaipara, making him one of the largest and wealthiest private land owners in late-nineteenth century Auckland.^{xviii} Within a year of acquiring the Remuera land, however, it was leased to David Hay, a nurseryman who would establish a thriving nursery business on the site and become one of New Zealand's leading pioneer horticulturalists.^{xix}

³ Alfred Buckland married twice. Following Eliza Wallen's death in 1866, he married Matilda Jane Frodsham (1847-1932).

⁴ First known by that name in 1863.

⁵ He would eventually have 21 children – 14 daughters and seven sons.

David Hay (1815-1883) and 'Montpellier Nursery'

David Hay was born in Rhynd, Scotland in 1815, the son of weaver, John Hay and his wife, Ann (nee. McGregor).^{xx} At the age of 12, he began a three-year gardener apprenticeship on an estate in Perthshire – reputedly the castle grounds of the Duke of Hawthorn.^{xxi} He later gained experience working at other estates, possibly in the English counties of Hertfordshire and Gloucestershire where he lived with his wife Sarah (nee. Baker).^{xxii} In 1855, Hay, his wife and their six children⁶ immigrated to New Zealand, settling in Auckland.

In 1856, on the 25 acres of land leased from Alfred Buckland⁷ on Seaview Road, Hay established the 'Montpellier Nursery'. With a yearly rent of £85, the lease was offered for a period of ten years with the option of purchasing the land at any time for the sum of £1,000.^{xxiii} The nursery was set up on the northern portion of the land (on the corner of Seaview Road and present-day Shore Road), which offered deep alluvial soil while the remaining was grazed by milch cows.^{xxiv} Initially selling garden seeds, Hay soon advertised a large collection of trees, shrubs and plants for sale, and by the early 1860s, he was credited with the first commercial importation of *Pinus radiata* – a tree that would go on to transform New Zealand's landscape.^{xxv}

The nursery was one of two commercial gardens established in Remuera during the early 1860s. The other, 'Mount Hobson Nursery', was set up by nurseryman, C. T. Wren on the fertile northern slopes of the maunga.^{xxvi} During this time, Remuera's rural landscape was dotted with a mixture of country cottages and an increasing number of grand houses in park-like settings, which were home to some of the most influential and prosperous individuals in the country – ideal clientele for both enterprises.

After five years leasing Allotments 5, 9, 13 and 16, Hay purchased the land in 1861.^{xxvii} By this time the southern portion of Allotment 16 had been sold to James Baber the Elder, so Hay's acquisition now comprised just over 23 acres, bought at the reduced sum of £900.^{xxviii} With his nursery business flourishing, Hay continued to extend his landholding by acquiring upwards of 14 acres of surrounding land⁸ between 1862 and 1874.^{xxix}

By 1879, Hay's only son, David Alexander Hay (c.1853-1933) became a partner in the business ('D. Hay and Son') and took over its management following his father's death in 1883.^{xxx} With a staff of 20, Montpellier Nursery (Figure 6) had, by that time, achieved much recognition and success both locally and internationally.^{xxxi}

⁶ A seventh child joined the family soon after their arrival in New Zealand.

⁷ The deed also refers to the land being leased from Henry Matson.

⁸ This included parts of allotments 3 and 4 on the western side of Seaview Road (1862-4), Allotment 1 on the edge of Hobson Bay (1874), and Allotment 2, Section 16 of the Suburbs of Auckland on the corner of present-day Shore and Arney roads (1874). The neighbouring 11-acre Allotment 4, Section 16 on Arney Road was acquired sometime later.



Figure 6: Showing the gardens on each side of the main walk leading to the office and plant houses of the Montpellier Nursery on Seaview Road in 1897 (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 7-A4590).

Northern part of Allotment 16

In 1884, David A. Hay, as executor of his father's will, leased a strip of land at the southern end of the substantial nursery site to produce merchant, Robert Nairn Ryburn (c.1839-1902).^{xxxii} Comprising the northern half of original Allotment 16, the two-acre parcel of land had a frontage to Seaview Road and dropped away to a creek at its eastern boundary. It was upon this land that the villa at present-day 35 Seaview Road was built.

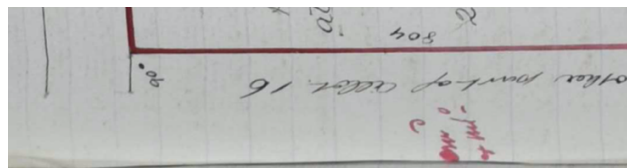


Figure 7: Showing the two-acre northern part of Allotment 16, Section 14 Suburbs of Auckland as set out in the lease between David A. Hay and Robert Ryburn in 1884. The two-acre southern portion of Allotment 16 had been sold prior to Hay's father purchasing in nursery land in 1861.

With a yearly rent of £136, the lease was offered for a period of ten years with the option of purchasing the land at any time for the sum of £1,600.^{xxxiii} The land came with at least two buildings and the lease required that these were well maintained and insured for £800:

"[the Lessee] will during the said term keep and maintain the buildings now or hereafter...in good and reasonable condition and repair ordinary wear and tear (and damage by fire) alone excepted. And in particular will during the sixth year of the said term in a workmanlike manner paint with two coats of good...oil colour all the outside parts of the said buildings previously or usually painted and further will forthwith ensure and during the said term keep insured all buildings which now are or may hereafter be erected on the said land against loss or damage by fire...for the sum of eight hundred

pounds.^{xxxiv}

The Ryburn family had owned land on Seaview Road from as early as 1866, when Ryburn's wife, Sophia inherited part of the 'Roseneath' estate from her father – pioneer missionary, Reverend James Hamlin^{9,xxxv} Comprising parts of Allotments 3 and 4, the estate was located on the western side of Seaview Road and remained in the ownership (and periodic occupation) of the Ryburn family until at least the turn of the century.^{xxxvi}

It is unclear for what purpose Allotment 16 was leased by Ryburn in 1884 and for how long he retained the lease. With his residence in such close proximity, it is possible that the leased land provided further acreage and ancillary buildings for farming or was used in association with 'W. S. Laurie & Co', a business of seeds and produce merchants he had joined as partner that same year.^{xxxvii} By the end of 1899, however, the property was in ownership Mary Boulcott Bews, the wife of agent Gordon Wallace Bews, and would remain in their family ownership for the following four decades.^{xxxviii}

The Bews family ownership (1899-1940)

Gordon Wallace (G. W.) Bews (1862-1938) (Figure 8) was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland in 1862, the third son¹⁰ of ship-owner, David Bews and his wife Ann (nee. Anderson).^{xxxix} Receiving a comfortable, middle-class upbringing, G. W. Bews commenced his career with the firm J. & P. Coats, cotton manufacturers associated with the early weaving and textile industries of Paisley, Scotland.^{xi} In 1885, G. W. Bews and his family immigrated to New Zealand, settling initially in Dunedin and later in Auckland.^{xii} Here he entered the service of the Bank of New Zealand before establishing his own Fort Street-based business as an agent.

In 1892, G. W. Bews married Mary Boulcott Taylor (1862-1957), the fourth daughter of successful farmer and businessman, William Innes Taylor¹¹ of Glen Innes.^{xiii} By 1897, they were living on Remuera's Seaview



Figure 8: Mr G. W. Bews (New Zealand Herald, Volume LXXV, Issue 23036, 13 May 1938, Papers

⁹ Reverend James Hamlin was one of the early Church Missionary Society missionaries who arrived in New Zealand during the 1820s.

¹⁰ David and Ann Bews had at least eight children.

¹¹ William Innes Taylor and his three brothers were extensive landholders in the mid-to-late-nineteenth century Auckland. He at Glen Innes (named after him), Richard James Taylor at Glendowie, Charles John Taylor at Glen Orchard (now Saint Heliers), and Allan Kerr Taylor in Mount Albert where he built his home 'Alberton'.

Road, and it was here that they would raise *Past*).
their one son and four daughters¹².^{xliii}

Two years later, the sale of the northern portion of original Allotment 16 between David A. Hay and Mary Bews was registered. The two-acre property was purchased for £1,050 and contained at least two buildings.^{xliiv} It is likely that one of these buildings was the residence that had been occupied by the Bews family for at least two years, and, quite possibly, the same residence that forms the subject of this research project – ‘Strathcona’.

‘Strathcona’

The residence located at present-day 35 Seaview Road, known as Strathcona¹³, was built before 1905 (Figure 9). A single-storey, single-bay villa with central gutter roof, the dwelling was positioned close to the road frontage but orientated north to face the harbour. It featured a bay window on its northern bay; a wraparound verandah that extended along the length of west (road-side) elevation; and three brick chimneys. A modest outbuilding with mono-pitch roof and chimney was located to the south (rear) of house and access onto the property from Seaview Road was gained via a timber gate located at the northern and southern end of the road-side boundary.

Although the exact date of the villa’s construction is not known, records indicate that a number of buildings had been established on the site by 1884 when the northern portion of Allotment 16 was leased to Ryburn. Although it does not appear that Ryburn lived on the property, it is clear that the Bews family was occupying a property on Seaview Road from as early as 1897, possibly indicating that the villa was built by this time. The building’s proportions, architectural detailing and orientation to face the harbour rather than the road (like other dwellings along the street) suggest that the villa could date from the 1880s to 1890s.



¹² Ian Bews, Heather Bews (later Gordon), Joyce Bews (later McKenzie), Marion (‘Tui’) Bews (later Chester) and Kathleen Bews (later McMickle).

¹³ The earliest reference to the name ‘Strathcona’ was in 1921.



Figure 9: (Top) A panorama showing Mount Hobson (centre distance) and surrounding residential streets, including Seaview Road, taken from Parnell Road near Ayr Street in 1905 (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 1-W1207-PAN). (Above) A close-up image showing the subject residence at present-day 35 Seaview Road (centre) in its original location close to the road-side boundary.

The house, which was known as 'Strathcona' by 1921, was the centre of family life and social activities. In a story documenting her time growing up at the property and in Remuera, Heather Gordon (nee. Bews), eldest daughter of G. W. and Mary Bews, wrote:

"Our house was a hospitable one and two or three generations of guests were welcomed, especially people interested in music and dancing. My parents were keen supporters of the Remuera Musical Society...[and] organised concerts for charity, with singing, recitations and short plays."^{xlv}

The property also served as the venue for other family events and celebrations, most notably as the wedding reception for a number of the Bews' children.^{xlvi}

Further land acquisitions and early changes

In 1904, Hay's nursery estate was surveyed and a plan was drawn up for the 'Town of Montpellier' – a subdivision of 20 lots, which were gradually sold over the following three decades (Figure 10).^{xlvii} In 1911, Mary Bews acquired the western portion of Lot 1 of the subdivision.^{xlviii}



Figure 10: Deposit Plan 3352 showing the subdivision of part of the remaining nursery estate, which was surveyed in 1904 for the trustees of the late David Hay. Named the 'Town of Montpellier', the land was split into 20 lots. Also shown is the northern portion of Allotment 16 acquired by Mary Boulcott Bews in 1899 (highlighted) and the subdivided land purchased in 1911 (outlined) (Land Information New Zealand).

Located directly north of the family's property, the land measured approximately half an acre and had been split further into lots 1, 2 and 4 (Figure 11).^{xlix} Two years later, portions of lots 1 and 2 were conveyed to Wilfred Black, John Burns and Edwin Eggleston, while Lot 4 – a narrow strip of land – was incorporated into the Bews property.¹

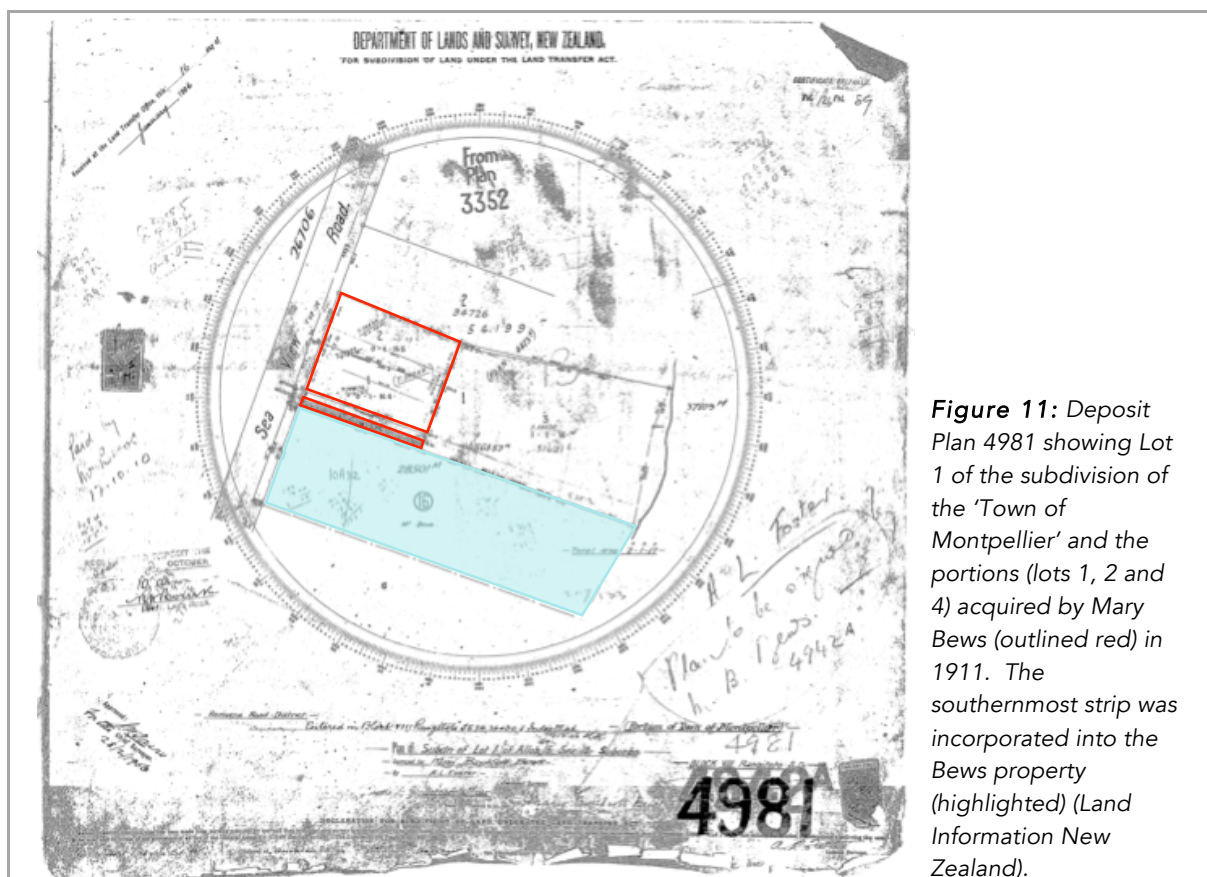


Figure 11: Deposit Plan 4981 showing Lot 1 of the subdivision of the 'Town of Montpellier' and the portions (lots 1, 2 and 4) acquired by Mary Bews (outlined red) in 1911. The southernmost strip was incorporated into the Bews property (highlighted) (Land Information New Zealand).

The first recorded change to the villa was a timber addition in 1913.^{li} Designed by Auckland-based architect, James T. D. Lloyd, the extension was possibly a small structure added to the rear (southwestern corner) of the dwelling to provide accommodation for domestic help.^{lii} In 1915, the Bews' property was recorded as comprising a wood house, a shed and just over two acres of land, which had a combined value of £2,650.^{liii} In 1918, works were undertaken to repair the dwelling by contractors, Construction Limited.^{liv} At that time, the property was addressed as 13 Seaview Road.^{lv} A year later, further works were carried out to repair the gate posts by contractor, J. Dempsey.^{lvi}

The dance hall

By 1920, a 'recreation room' had been added to the property (Figure 12).^{lvii} Positioned immediately south of the dwelling, the single-storey asbestos structure was used as a dance hall.

The story goes that the dance hall had its origins at Mount Eden College¹⁴, a private school for girls that opened in Mount Eden in 1895.^{lviii} The enterprise was established by two of G. W. Bews' sisters – Mary Ellen (May) Bews, a teacher and proficient linguistic and Kate Bews, a governess – so it is entirely possible that a connection could be made.^{lix}

¹⁴ It is also understood that the college gymnasium was relocated to present-day 25 Seaview Road.



Figure 12: An extract from the 'City of Auckland Map', showing the buildings on part of Seaview in c.1920. No. 13 (later 35) Seaview Road is outlined and shows the single-storey 'wooden' house (Strathcona) and the single-storey 'asbestos' dance hall to the rear (ACC 001 City of Auckland Map 1908, L17, Auckland Council Archives).

Mount Eden College opened with six pupils and operated out of 'Mayfield', a residence on Owens Road¹⁵. A year later, the school moved to a larger two-storey residence on Stokes Road¹⁶ to accommodate its rapidly increasing roll. When Kate Bews left to attend to family obligations, she was replaced by another sister – Alice.^{lx} The school and its grounds continued to expand, and by 1912, with a roll of 210 pupils (including 43 boarders), Mount Eden College had become the largest private girls' school in New Zealand and was considered a model of its kind.^{lxi}

In 1914, realising that their resources were insufficient to further develop the college, the Bews sisters accepted an offer from the Auckland Presbyterian College for Ladies Limited Board to purchase the school as a going concern.^{lxii} The terms of the sale were

¹⁵ 'Mayfield', a square-fronted villa still stands at 109 Owens Road.

¹⁶ On the site of present-day 6-8 Stokes Road. The dining hall still stands, albeit modified, at 4 Stokes Road.

negotiated by G. W. Bews on behalf of his sisters.^{lxiii} The property at this time comprised several buildings that had been used for school purposes, including an assembly or 'drill' hall (measuring 40 x 30), a bath house, and newly-built fire-proof asbestos classrooms.^{lxiv} When the school, then known as St Cuthbert's College, relocated to new Market Road premises in 1924, a number of buildings made the move from Mount Eden to Epsom. These included a dining hall, an assembly hall, a caretaker's cottage, piano rooms and shelter sheds.^{lxv}

Based on the information available, it seems unlikely that G. W. Bews would have acquired one of the school buildings prior to the Auckland Presbyterian Board purchasing the college in 1914, as it was sold by his sisters as a going concern. It is possible, however, that a building was obtained and moved to Remuera prior to the college relocating to its new site in the early 1920s. The building that most resembles the dance hall in construction is what is believed to be the asbestos board and batten classrooms built in c.1912 (Figure 13). Whether any part of this building was classed as the dining hall or piano rooms that were moved to Epsom, however, is unknown, but photographic evidence indicates that the building had been removed from Mount Eden before 1928¹⁷.



Figure 13: The college building believed to be the asbestos classrooms, built in c.1912. It is possible that part of this building was relocated to Seaview Road when it was moved off the site (Mount Eden College Old Girls. Records 1932-1974. Auckland War Memorial Museum Library. MS-730-1).

In her account, Heather Graham also made reference to the dance hall, called the 'ballroom', which adds another dimension to the building's story.

"My father built us a ballroom measuring 60 feet by 30 feet, detached from the house, and many small dances were held there. Usually one of the family would play the piano but for a larger dance, we might hire an orchestra of three."^{lxvi}

Although reference is made to G. W. Bews building the dance hall, this does not mean that the building's association with Mount Eden College should be automatically

¹⁷ The building is visible in a 1913 and 1916 image of the Mount Eden site (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 1-W1396 and 1-W1375) but is no longer in place in a similar image taken in 1928 (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 1-W817).

discounted. It remains feasible that the building was relocated to Seaview Road around 1920 and (re)building works carried out to extend and adapt it to suit the family's requirements.

By 1926, the dance hall or ballroom featured a hall, stage, shoe room, laundry and garage (Figure 14) and had, by then, provided the venue for a number of family events. In 1930, the ballroom (and Strathcona) was mentioned in a newspaper article that detailed the wedding of Heather Bews and Colin Gordon:

"Bowls of hydrangeas made a wonderful display in the reception hall and rooms and the tables in the dining-room were arranged with pale pink chrysanthemums and carnations. The ballroom, where the guests spent a happy evening dancing, was brightly festooned with coloured streamers and greenery."^{lxvii}

Relocation of the buildings

In 1926, the Bews were granted a building permit for the relocation of Strathcona and the dance hall at a cost of £400.^{lxviii} Plans were drawn up by architect, James T. D. Lloyd showing the buildings' proposed new locations close to the centre of the site and their internal layouts (Figure 14). At that time, Strathcona featured a central hallway with a living room and dining room to the west, three bedrooms to the east, and a kitchen, bathroom, maid's room and additional 'back' room to the rear.

Local legend has it that an elephant(s) borrowed from Auckland Zoo hauled the buildings eastwards down the slope into their new position on the site.^{lxix} As fabricated as the story may sound, it is not altogether implausible. The first elephant¹⁸ at Auckland Zoo arrived in mid-1923.^{lxx} First housed at the council works depot (present-day Victoria Park Market), she was later transported to the Western Springs site.^{lxxi} After her arrival at the zoo, however, she was occasionally walked to the weighbridge at the council depot to be weighed – trips that were, apparently, not without incident.^{lxxii} Circuses were also relatively popular in New Zealand during the early to mid-decades of the twentieth century, some of which travelled with elephants that stopped to entertain local children.^{lxxiii} Whether an elephant from Auckland Zoo, or even a travelling circus, was in the Remuera area in 1926 to lend a hand with the relocation of the buildings at Seaview Road, however, remains a mystery and the origins of such a remarkable tale are still unresolved.

What is clear is that the relocation of the buildings was undertaken in preparation of subdividing the site, which occurred in stages between 1927 and 1938.

Subdivision of the site

The first plan to subdivide the Bews' property was prepared in 1927 (Figure 15), which involved dividing the land into three parcels. Two were street-fronting lots, each measuring just over a quarter of an acre, and the third was a larger rear lot measuring an acre-and-a-half, which captured the recently relocated Strathcona and dance hall.

¹⁸ Called Jamuna, from Calcutta.

By that time, both buildings had been extended. Strathcona to its south-eastern corner, where the rear passage-way/store had been replaced with a larger room, and the dance hall to its north-western corner, possibly to allow for the reconfiguration of the garage to accommodate a new right of way along the site's northern boundary.

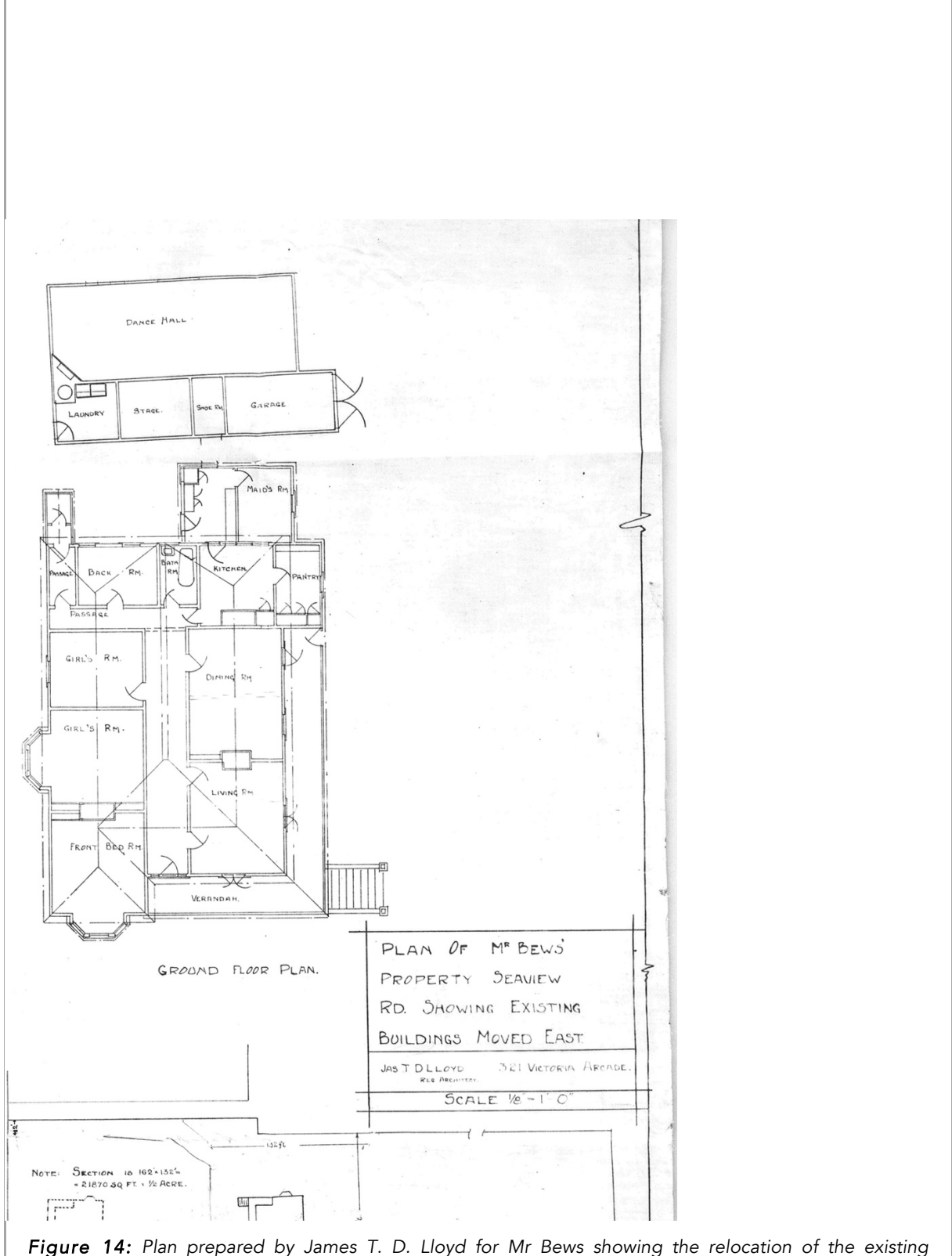


Figure 14: Plan prepared by James T. D. Lloyd for Mr Bews showing the relocation of the existing

buildings eastwards on the site, and their internal layouts (AKC 338 Building Consents Microfilm 1908, Seaview Road, Auckland Council Archives).

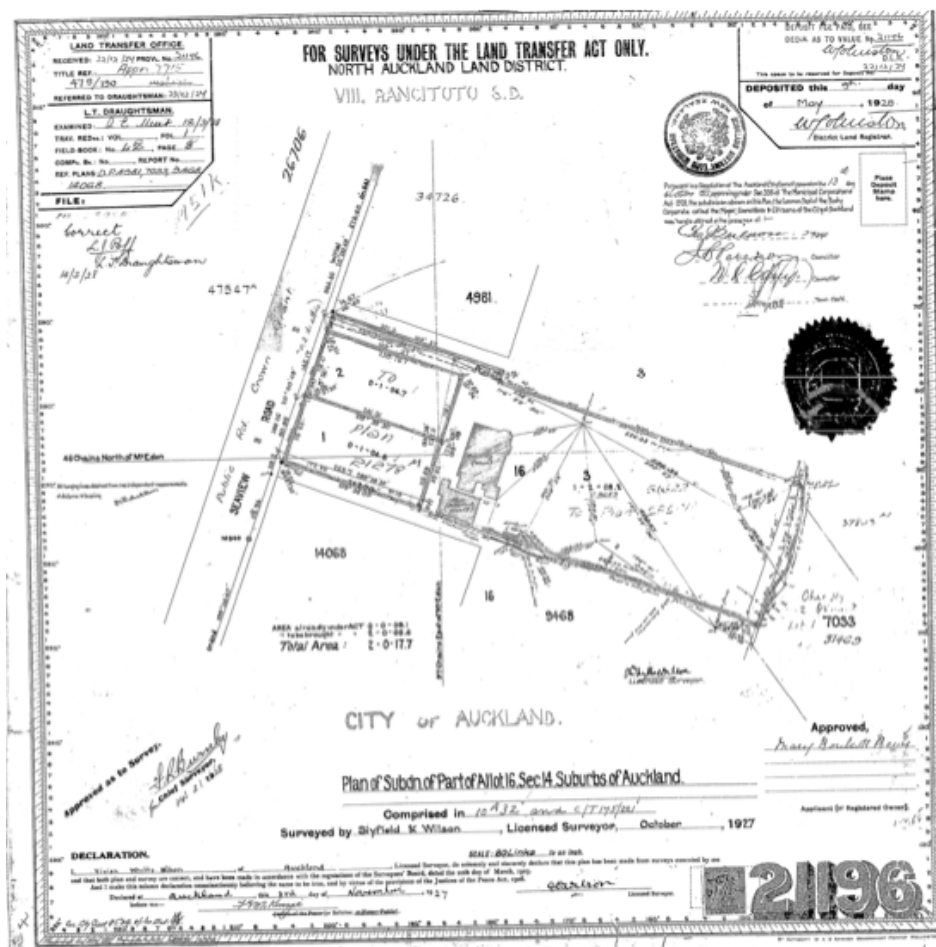


Figure 15: Deposit Plan 21196 showing the proposed subdivision of the Bews' property into three lots in 1927. Note the new locations of Strathcona and the dance hall and their new additions (Land Information New Zealand).

At the end of the year, another plan was prepared to re-subdivide the two street-fronting lots into three lots, each measuring approximately 30 perches¹⁹.^{lxxiv} The subdivision was approved in 1928 and the three lots on-sold to builders and contractors Robert and James Mortimer, partners in the Mount Eden-based firm Mortimer Bros.^{lxxv} That same year, building permits were issued for the construction of a dwelling on each of the three lots, which became present-day 29, 31 and 33 Seaview Road.^{lxxvi}

After the subdivision, the rear lot occupied by Strathcona was addressed as 35 Seaview Road. By 1930, the property was described as a wood house, garage and recreation room and land (at back), which covered an area of one and a half acres and incorporated a 20 foot (width) right of way.^{lxxvii} At that time, the combined value of the buildings and land was recorded as £2,000.^{lxxviii}

Following the death of G. W. Bews in 1938 at the age 75 years, Mary Bews further subdivided the property (Figure 16).^{lxxix} The land, then described as 'very heavy gorse underscrub and wattle', was split into two three-quarter-acre parcels that extended the length of the site down to the creek at its eastern boundary. The western edge of the

¹⁹ Approximately 750 square metres.

new lot ran parallel to the eastern elevation of Strathcona and access was gained by the existing right of way, which was divided in half along its length. The new lot, subsequently addressed 35A Seaview Road, was purchased in 1939 and a dwelling subsequently erected (Figure 17). Mary Bews remained at Strathcona until 1940 when it was given a new lease of life as St John’s Hospital.^{lxxx}

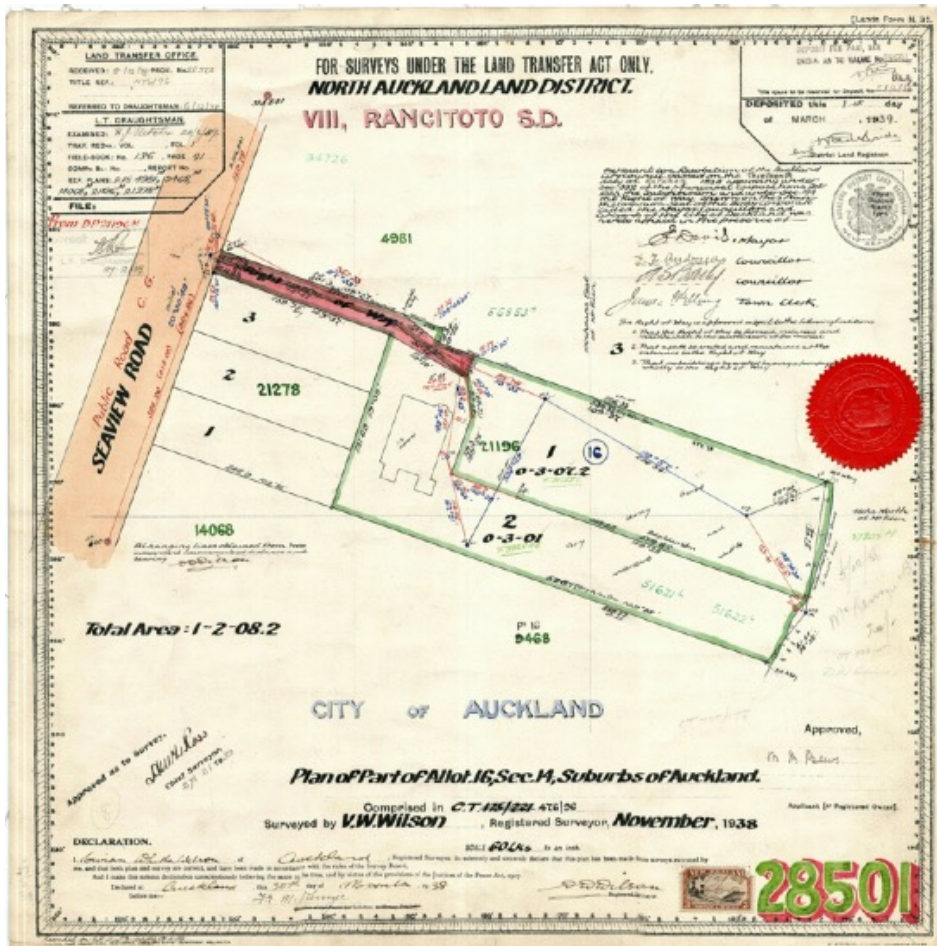


Figure 16: Deposit Plan 28501 showing the proposed subdivision of 35 Seaview Road into two rear lots in 1938 (Land Information New Zealand).



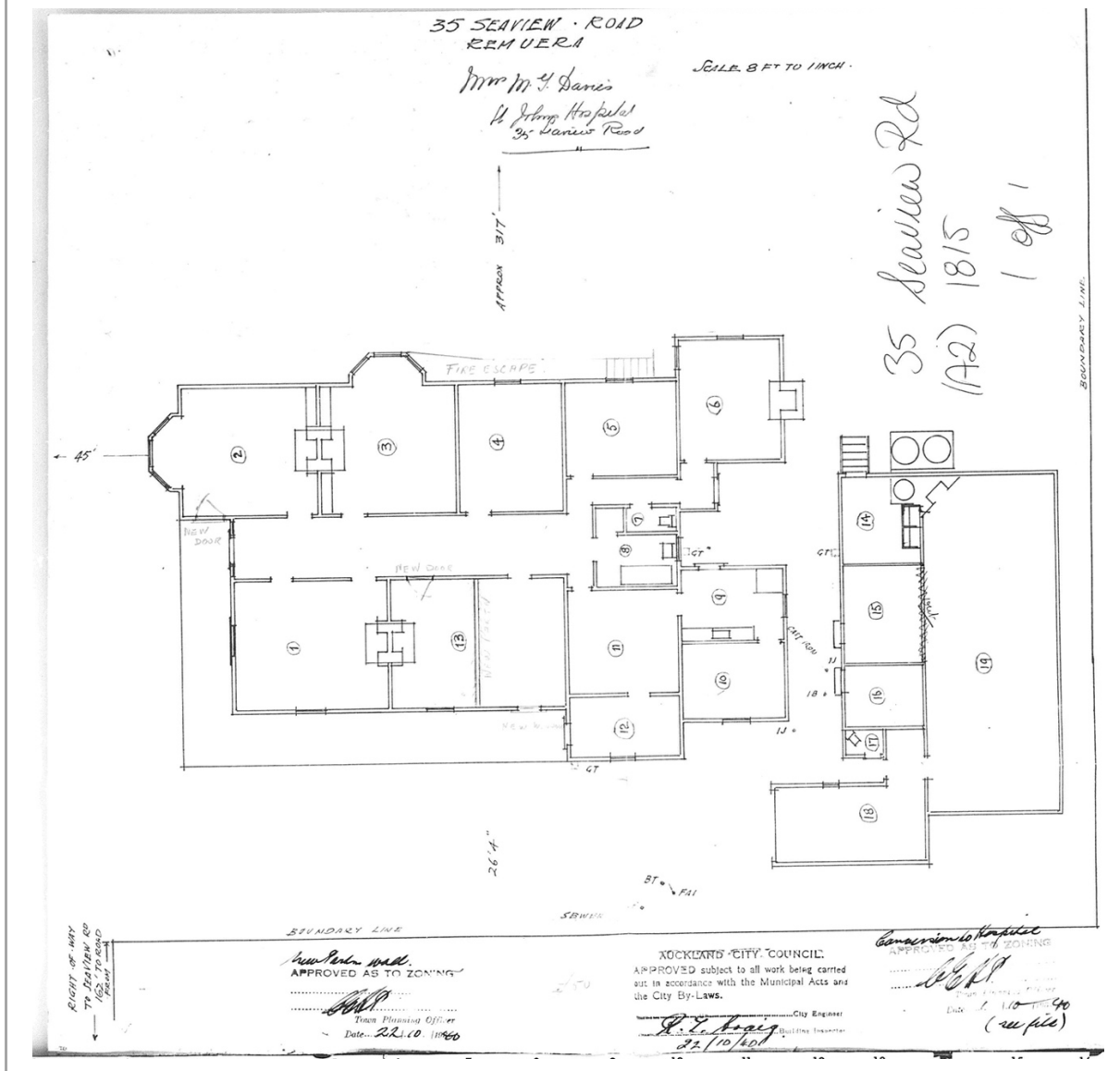
Figure 17: A 1940 aerial image showing the broader site (northern portion of original Allotment 16)

outlined, with Strathcona in the centre and the three new dwellings close to the road-side boundary. The new dwelling at 35A Seaview Road had not yet been built (Auckland Council GeoMaps).

St John's Hospital (1940-1959)

After over 40 years of ownership, Mary Bews sold Strathcona for £2,000.^{lxxxix} It was purchased by Miss Margaret Georgina Davies, a nurse who served in the NZANS²⁰ during the First World War and was presented with a Royal Red Cross for special services in military nursing.^{lxxxix} In 1921, Sister Margaret was awarded a travelling scholarship at Bedford College, London by the New Zealand Red Cross and Order of St John and was later Matron at Palmerston North Hospital.^{lxxxix}

Just a few months after her acquisition of Strathcona in 1940, Margaret Davies applied for a building permit at a cost of £50 to make minor alterations to the property to accommodate its new use as a post-operative and convalescent home, called St John's Hospital (Figure 18).^{lxxxix}



²⁰ New Zealand Army Nursing Service.

Figure 18: Internal layout of the villa and dance hall in 1940, which became St John's Hospital (AKC 339 Building Permit and Consents Aperture Cards 1908-1997, Auckland Council Archives).

Five years later, the hospital was acquired by Auckland nurse, Anna Rachel Glover for just over £2,928.^{lxxxv} Soon after, she applied for a permit to make internal alterations to the former dance hall to provide further accommodation at a cost of £176.^{lxxxvi} The works involved the installation of partitions within the hall to provide a sitting room and three bedrooms, which would serve as staff quarters (Figure 19). At that time, the hospital had capacity for a maximum of 16 patients (plus staff).^{lxxxvii} Further internal modifications amounting to £50 were carried out to the staff quarters in 1949 (Figure 20). These included the removal of a partition to create a larger bedroom and sitting room for the Cook; the conversion of the washhouse into a kitchenette; the lining of the bathroom and hall with wallboard; and the installation of a passageway leading out to a set of external steps.

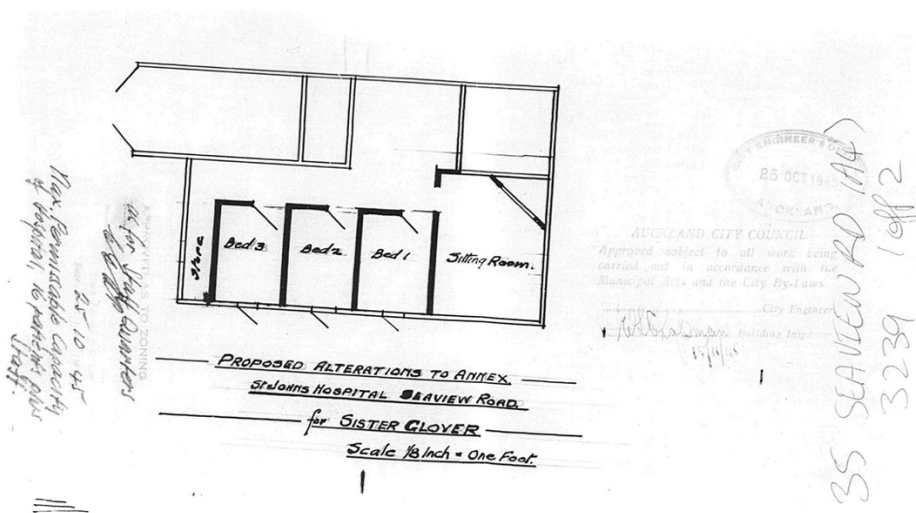


Figure 19: Proposed changes to the internal layout of the dance hall to provide hospital staff accommodation in 1945 (AKC 339 Building Permit and Consents Aperture Cards 1908-1997, Auckland Council Archives).

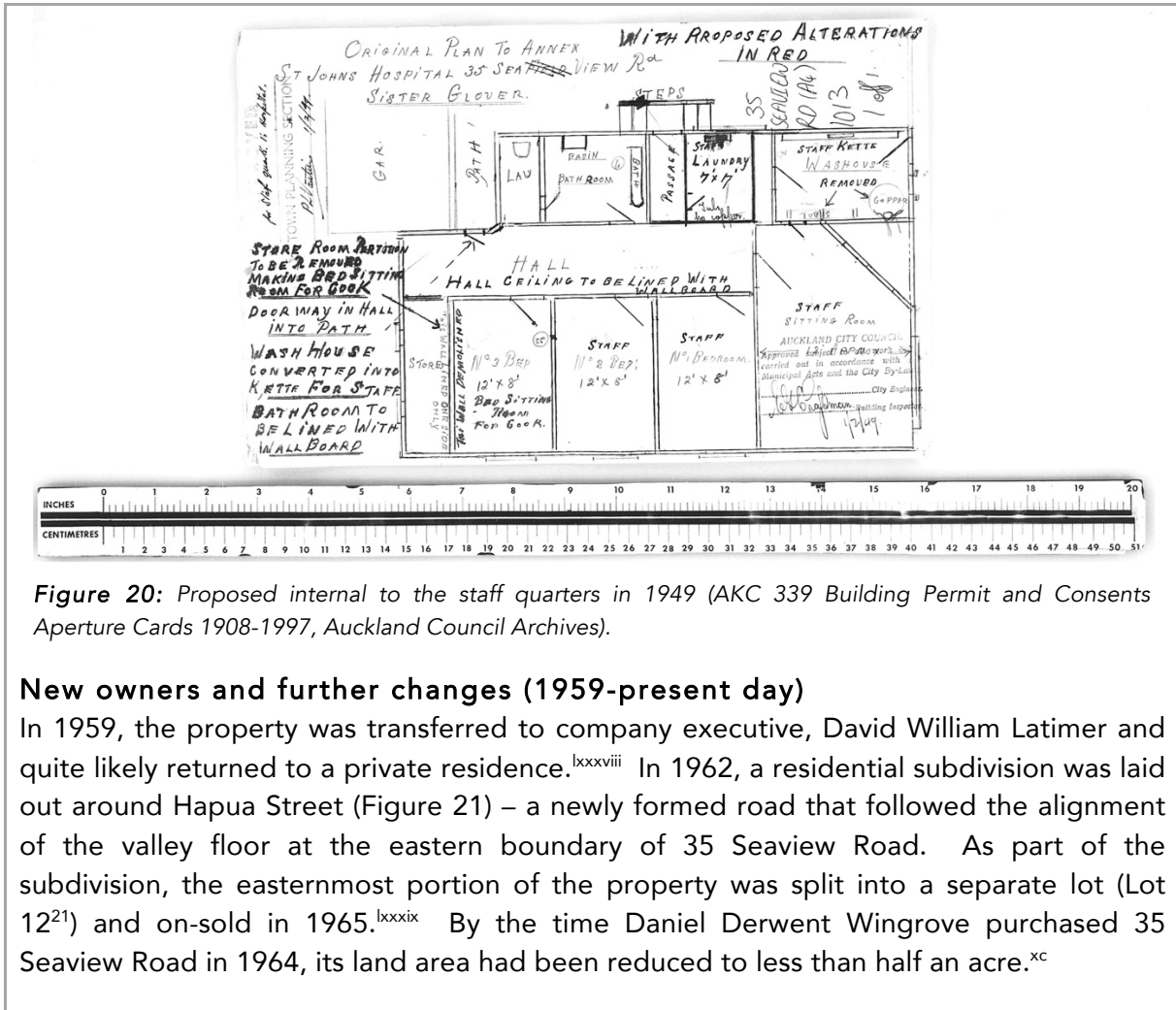


Figure 20: Proposed internal to the staff quarters in 1949 (AKC 339 Building Permit and Consents Aperture Cards 1908-1997, Auckland Council Archives).

New owners and further changes (1959-present day)

In 1959, the property was transferred to company executive, David William Latimer and quite likely returned to a private residence.^{lxxxviii} In 1962, a residential subdivision was laid out around Hapua Street (Figure 21) – a newly formed road that followed the alignment of the valley floor at the eastern boundary of 35 Seaview Road. As part of the subdivision, the easternmost portion of the property was split into a separate lot (Lot 12²¹) and on-sold in 1965.^{lxxxix} By the time Daniel Derwent Wingrove purchased 35 Seaview Road in 1964, its land area had been reduced to less than half an acre.^{xc}

²¹ Present-day 75 Hapua Street. Neighbouring lots 9 and 10 of the subdivision became present-day 71 and 73 Hapua Street.

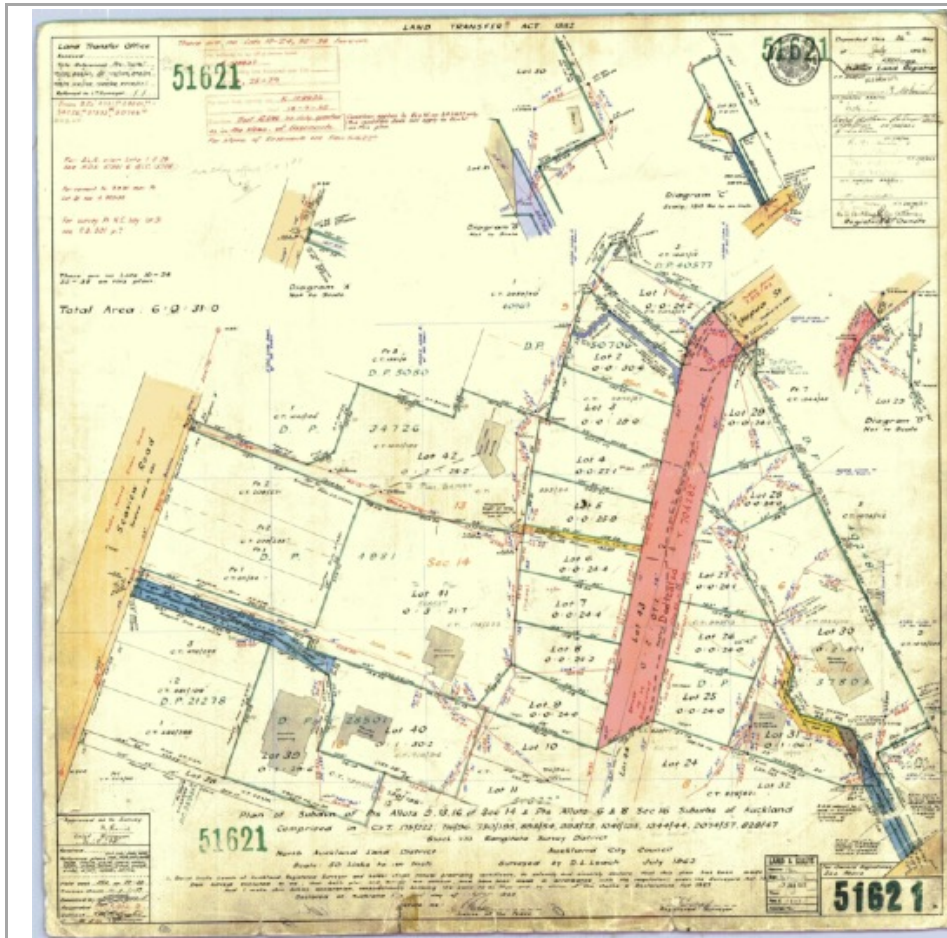


Figure 21: Deposit Plan 51621 showing the 42-lot residential subdivision around Hapua Street. 35 Seaview Road was further divided becoming Lot 39 of the subdivision and its eastern portion of land becoming Lot 12 (Land Information New Zealand).

The property changed hands several times over subsequent years. In 1982, when it was in the ownership of Mr and Mrs R. Naish, plans were drawn up for alterations and additions to the residence (Figure 22).^{xc} Designed by Abacus Design & Build, the works involved the demolition of a small rear addition, added following the relocation of the building in 1926, and its replacement with a brick patio and timber deck, and the construction of a basement garage beneath the dwelling’s principal (northern) bay.^{xcii}

Further changes and renovations were carried out by Richard and Deborah Nelson, who purchased the property in 1993.^{xciii} Plans were drawn up in 1997 by Richard Priest Architects for alterations and additions to the rear portion of the dwelling (Figure 23). Works involved

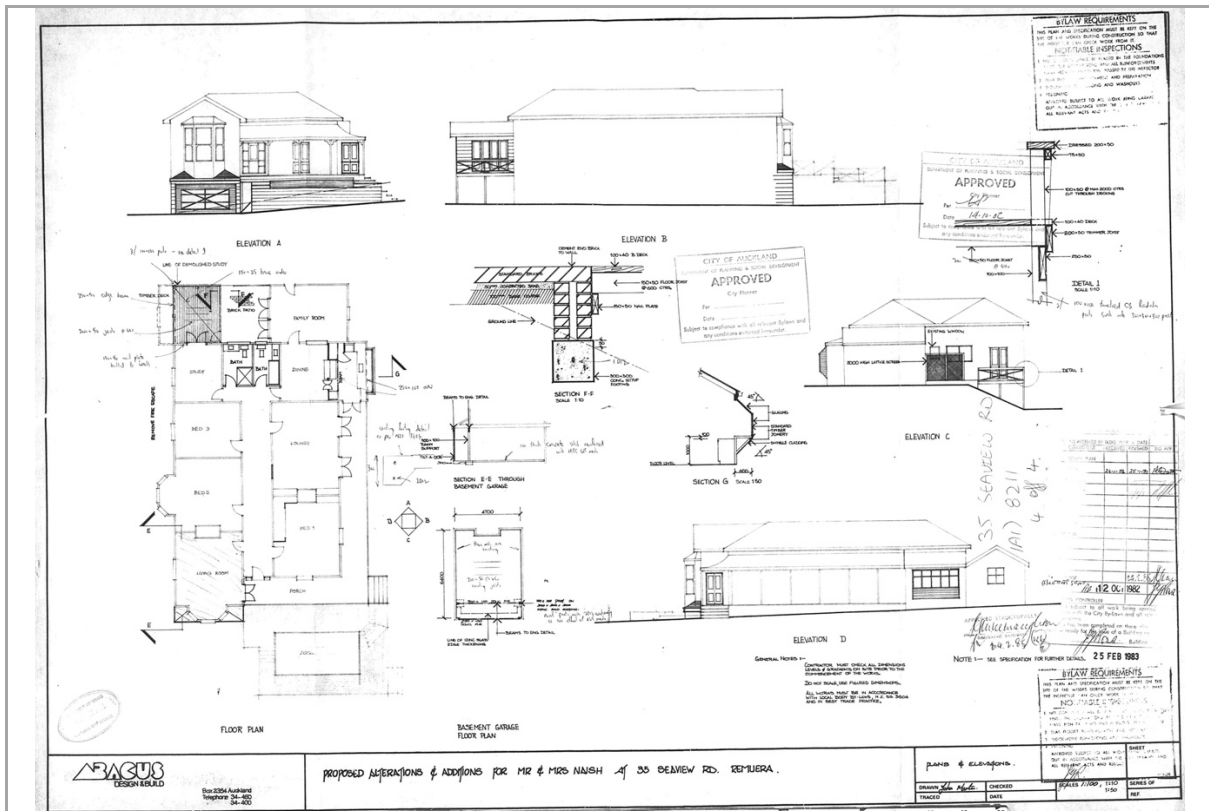


Figure 22: Architectural drawings showing the proposed basement garage and patio/decking to rear in 1982 (AKC 339 Building Permit and Consents Aperture Cards 1908-1997, Auckland Council Archives).

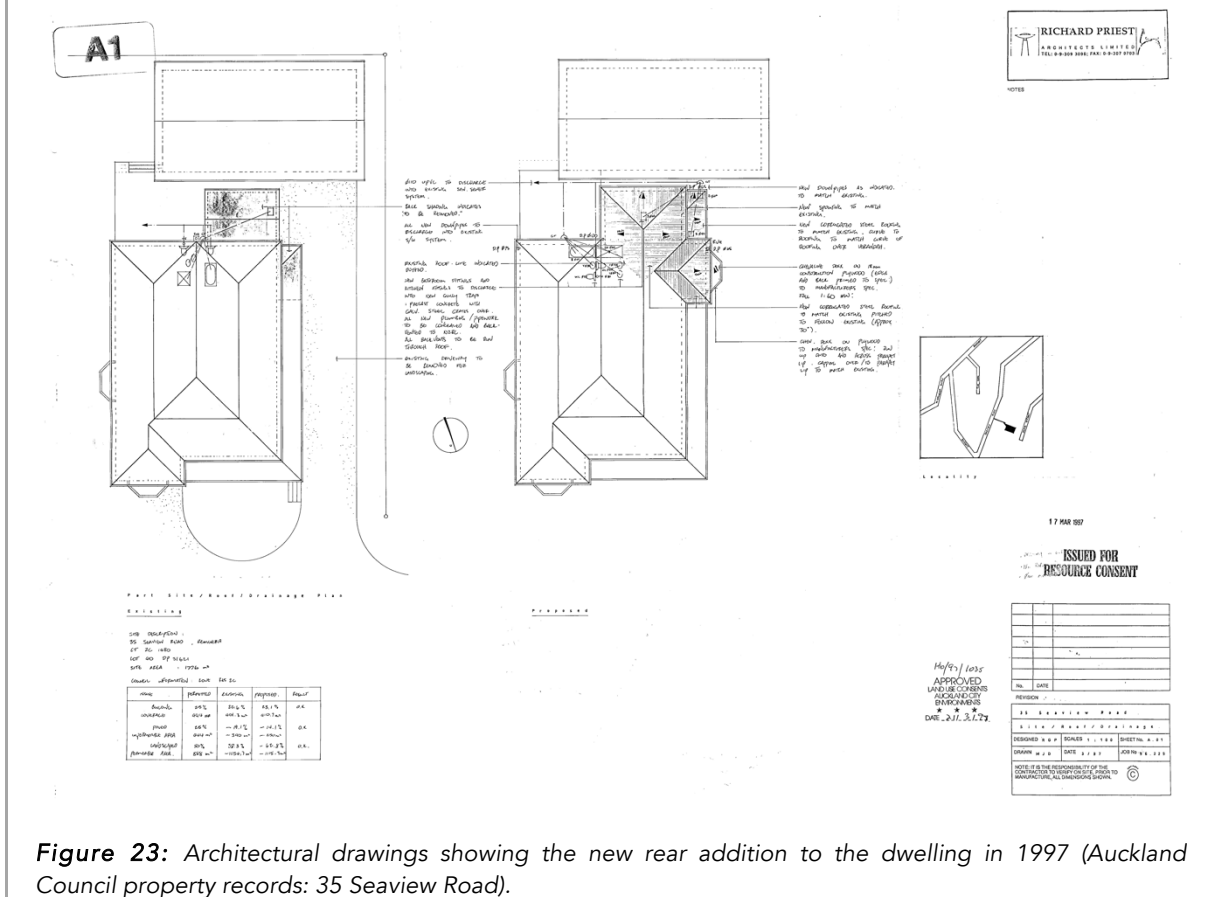


Figure 23: Architectural drawings showing the new rear addition to the dwelling in 1997 (Auckland Council property records: 35 Seaview Road).

the demolition of a small gabled structure, possibly added in 1913 as the maid's room, and its replacement with a new addition to accommodate a new kitchen, laundry and family room.^{xciv} The addition followed the alignment of the existing hipped roof to the rear and created a new hipped bay with bay window that extended from the west elevation.

In 2010, 35 Seaview Road became the home of present owner, Lindsay Esler and his family. During the early years of the family's ownership, substantial works were carried out to upgrade the former dance hall, which now serves as secondary accommodation.^{xcv} The building was raised, some new external walls added and reclaimed windows installed. The internal layout was also changed to accommodate a three-bedroomed dwelling. At a similar time, the garden was excavated, terraced and landscaped. In 2021, construction began on alterations and additions to the principal residence. As of July, extensive works were underway to provide additional basement-level accommodation for the family.

Like many dwellings of its age, the residence formerly known as 'Strathcona' at 35 Seaview Road has undergone significant changes since it was first built (at least) 125 years ago. It has been extended and altered to accommodate changing uses and to serve the updated needs and requirements of its owners. Despite these changes, and no longer having the street presence it once had, the form and appearance of the villa is still highly legible and its early fabric and features appear to have been largely retained. Examples include its double-hung sash windows, wraparound verandah with concave roof, board and batten ceilings (albeit lowered in some rooms), and original fireplaces.

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August 2021



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Endnotes

- ⁱ The block was bounded on the north by the sea, south by the Tamaki (now Remuera) Road, west by the Ruareore Creek, and east by the Tiki Stream.
- ⁱⁱ Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, *A Fine Prospect: A History of Remuera, Meadowbank and St Johns*, Random House, 2011, 38 and 54; Winifred Macdonald, *Recollections A Sketch History of Early Remuera 1850-1920*, Milnes of Remuera, 1984, 3.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, 2011, 54.
- ^{iv} Deeds indexes 3A 2138, 3A 2140, 3A 2141, 3A 2143, 3A 2144, 3A 2147, 3A 2148 and 3A 2150, Archives New Zealand.
- ^v Deeds index 1D 632, Archives New Zealand.
- ^{vi} Deeds indexes 3A 2139, 2D 1664, 3A 2142 and 3D 202, Archives New Zealand.
- ^{vii} De Thierry families in New Zealand, www.lynlly.gen.nz/index.htm
- ^{viii} Funeral of the late Lieutenant Colonel Matson, *Daily Southern Cross*, Volume XXIII, Issue 3189, 5 October 1867, Papers Past.
- ^{ix} *Ibid.*; Death of Liet.-Col. Matson, *New Zealand Herald*, 2 October 1867, Papers Past.
- ^x *Ibid.*
- ^{xi} De Thierry families in New Zealand, www.lynlly.gen.nz/index.htm
- ^{xii} *Ibid.*; Funeral of the late Lieutenant Colonel Matson, *Daily Southern Cross*, Volume XXIII, Issue 3189, 5 October 1867, Papers Past; Death of Liet.-Col. Matson, *New Zealand Herald*, 2 October 1867, Papers Past.
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- ^{xiv} John Stacpoole. 'Buckland, Alfred', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, first published in 1990. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1b44/buckland-afred>
- ^{xv} *Ibid.*; Death of Alfred Buckland, *Auckland Star*, Volume XXXIV, Issue 140, 13 June 1903, Papers Past; Funeral of the late Mr. Alfred Buckland, *New Zealand Herald*, Volume XL, Issue 12297, 15 June 1903, Papers Past.
- ^{xvi} *Ibid.*
- ^{xvii} Martin Jones, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga List Entry Information for 'Highwic' (List no. 18), 21 August 2001, <https://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/18>
- ^{xviii} *Ibid.*; Death of Alfred Buckland, *Auckland Star*, Volume XXXIV, Issue 140, 13 June 1903, Papers Past; Funeral of the late Mr. Alfred Buckland, *New Zealand Herald*, Volume XL, Issue 12297, 15 June 1903, Papers Past; John Stacpoole. 'Buckland, Alfred', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, first published in 1990.
- ^{xix} Deeds Index 7D 100, Archives New Zealand; Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, 2011, 309-311.
- ^{xx} R. Winsome Shepherd. 'Hay, David', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, first published in 1993. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2h23/hay-david>
- ^{xxi} *Ibid.*; Allen M. Hale, *Pioneer Nurserymen of New Zealand*, A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1955, 50.
- ^{xxii} R. Winsome Shepherd. 'Hay, David', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, 1993.
- ^{xxiii} Deeds index 7D 100, Archives New Zealand.
- ^{xxiv} R. Winsome Shepherd. 'Hay, David', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, 1993.
- ^{xxv} Page 2 Advertisements Column 1, *New Zealander*, Volume XIV, Issue 1291, 1 September 1858, Papers Past; Page 2 Advertisements Column 3, *New Zealander*, Volume XV, Issue 1358, 23 April 1859, Papers Past; R. Winsome Shepherd. 'Hay, David', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, 1993; Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, 2011, 310.
- ^{xxvi} Allen M. Hale, 1955, 59-60; Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, 2011, 311.
- ^{xxvii} Deeds indexes 10A 32, 3A 2150 and 14D 118 Archives New Zealand.
- ^{xxviii} *Ibid.*; Deeds index 7D 419, Archives New Zealand.
- ^{xxix} Deeds indexes 3A 2135, 3A 2137 and 3A 2138, Archives New Zealand; Certificate of title NA7/192, Land Information New Zealand.
- ^{xxx} R. Winsome Shepherd. 'Hay, David', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, 1993; Allen M. Hale, 1955, 50-1.
- ^{xxxi} Allen M. Hale, 1955, 50-1; Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, 2011, 310.
- ^{xxxii} Deeds indexes 10A 32 and R12 617 (No. 90944), Archives New Zealand.
- ^{xxxiii} Deeds index R12 617 (No. 90944), Archives New Zealand.
- ^{xxxiv} *Ibid.*
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- ^{xxxvi} Remuera Road Board Valuation Rolls, RRB 003 Item No: 2 Page No: 19, Auckland Council Archives.
- ^{xxxvii} Page 4 Advertisements Column 4, *Waikato Times*, Volume XXIII, Issue 1923, 1 November 1884, Papers Past.
- ^{xxxviii} Deeds indexes R47 781 (No. 148254), BAJZ 23641 A1660 81/a R47 and 10A 32, Archives New Zealand; ACC 213 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Seaview Road 1915-1956, Record No. 329226, Auckland Council Archives.

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- ^{xlvi} Notes for Women, *New Zealand Times*, Volume XLVIII, Issue 11009, 19 September 1921, Papers Past; Weddings, *New Zealand Herald*, Volume LXV, Issue 20135, 21 December 1928, Papers Past; Remuera Wedding of Interest, *Sun (Auckland)*, Volume IV, Issue 959, 30 April 1930, Papers Past.
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- ^{xlviii} Ibid.
- ^{xlix} Certificate of title 175/221, Land Information New Zealand.
- ^l Ibid.; Certificate of title 475/190, Land Information New Zealand.
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- ^{lii} Ibid.
- ^{liii} ACC 213 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Seaview Road 1915-1956, Record No. 329226, Auckland Council Archives.
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- ^{lv} ACC 213 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Seaview Road 1915-1956, Record No. 329226, Auckland Council Archives.
- ^{lvi} ACC 431 Item No: 3, Auckland City Council Building Permit Cards, Auckland Council Archives.
- ^{lvii} ACC 213 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Seaview Road 1915-1956, Record No. 329226, Auckland Council Archives.
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- ^{lxiii} Letters from G. W. Bews to Mr Robertson, dated 7 October 1914, St Cuthbert's College Archives.
- ^{lxiv} Ibid.
- ^{lxv} Kelly Ana Morey, 2014, 37, 145 and 180.
- ^{lxvi} Mrs C M Gordon (Heather Bews) Story, original source unknown, St Cuthbert's College Archives.
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- ^{lxxviii} Ibid.
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^{boovii} ACC 213 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Seaview Road 1915-1956, Record No. 329226, Auckland Council Archives.

^{boovii} AKC 338 Building Consents Microfilm 1908, Seaview Road, Auckland Council Archives.

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^{boovix} Ibid.

^{xc} Ibid.

^{xc} AKC 338 Building Consents Microfilm 1908, Seaview Road, Auckland Council Archives.

^{xcii} Ibid.

^{xciii} Shelley Bridgeman, *Living in perfect harmony*, NZ House & Garden, August 2002, 140.

^{xciv} Auckland Council property records: 35 Seaview Road.

^{xcv} Lindsay Esler, pers. comm., 2 July 2021.