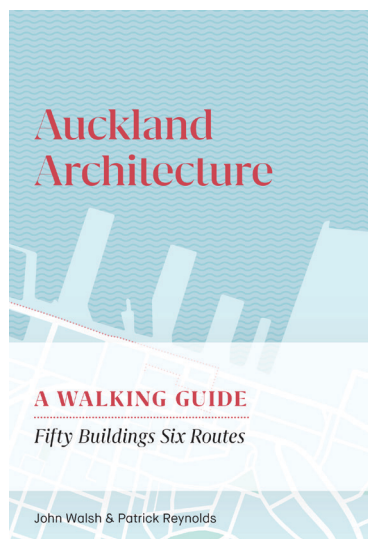




Auckland Architecture

A walking guide

JOHN WALSH AND PATRICK REYNOLDS



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LOOK AT AUCKLAND BUILDINGS THROUGH THE EYES OF AN ARCHITECTURE EXPERT

In this handy pocket guide, well-known architecture writer John Walsh teams up with architectural photographer Patrick Reynolds to offer a self-guided walking tour of 50 significant Auckland buildings, from the Victorian era to the brand new. The sparkling and informative text is accompanied by maps for each of the six routes.

'We purchased a copy last week and have just completed one of the walks. It was the most enjoyable experience, seeing our city through different eyes and learning about buildings that we had always passed in the car without a single thought. . . . One of our friends has already purchased one as well, on seeing ours, and I am sure more will be buying once we tell them how we are spending our Sunday afternoons.'

#10 on the Unity Books best-selling books of 2019 list (Unity Books Auckland)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

John Walsh is the communications director for the New Zealand Institute of Architects. He is the author (with photographer Patrick Reynolds) of several major books on architecture, including *New New Zealand Houses*, *Home Work*, *Big House Small House* and *City House Country House*. John lives in Auckland. **Patrick Reynolds** is one of New Zealand's best architectural photographers.

SALES POINTS

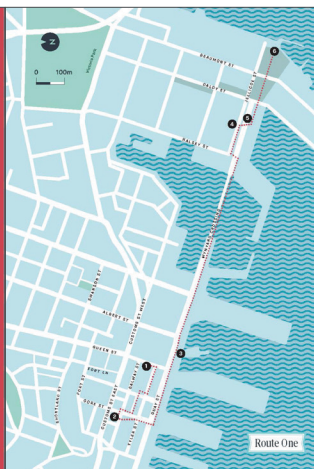
- A lively pocket guide that brings a new dimension to a visit to Auckland
- Expertly written and beautifully photographed
- Accessible price makes this an easy to carry memento of Auckland
- A terrific introduction to a range of architectural styles

PRINTABLE A3 POSTER AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST



BRITOMART & THE WATERFRONT

Auckland started out as a port, and the area around the docks was for decades the most vital part of town. For much of the twentieth century, though, the city's waterfront was out of bounds to the public. That's changed now, and the centre of gravity of the CBD is shifting back to the water's edge. This route takes in two urban-revival precincts: Britomart and Wynyard Quarter.



Old Arts Building University of Auckland

22 Princes Street
Roy Lippincott and Edward Bilson, 1926
Historic Place Category 1

It's hard to believe now, but the much-loved Old Arts Building at the University of Auckland — at its centre a clock tower decorated with a Regency of rubies and fawns — was very controversial when it was completed. Outraged locals viciously described the building, which is made of concrete faced with luminous Mount Somers stone, as "freak architecture", "Moon Gothic", "unfitted", and a "wedding cake". Much of the criticism was motivated by chauvinism. The competition to design the building had been won by American architect Roy Lippincott (1885–1949) and Australian draughtsman Edward Bilson (1882–1946). Both had been working in Australia for another American, Walter Burley Griffin (1876–1937), the architect of Canberra. Lippincott married Griffin's sister Gertrude. Lippincott has an intriguing place in New Zealand architecture: he was an innovative ornamentalist with, as one critic puts it, both historicist and proto-Modernt tendencies. He designed many institutional and commercial buildings and houses in Auckland before leaving New Zealand in 1929 for California, where he practised until his retirement in 1958.

ROUTE TWO 41



Northern Club

19 Princes Street
James Wrigley and Edward Ramsey, 1860s
Historic Place Category 1

Among the British institutions transplanted to Victorian New Zealand was the gentlemen's club. Versions of this home-away-from-home for moneyed males popped up in all of the colony's main cities, and other localities in Auckland, which was always less proper than the planned settlements to the south. The Northern Club was established in 1859, and in the same year the club bought the Royal Hotel, an Italianate brick building constructed only two years earlier to a design by architect James Wrigley (c1837–1887). The building was then reconfigured to house the club by another architect, Edward Ramsey (1824–1909), a pupil of the famous English Gothic Revivalist Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811–1878), who was lured for a while from Australia by the wealth of gold-rush Dunedin. The most dramatic of the Northern Club's various alterations is the resplendent contemporary Wintergarden addition (2008) designed by Fearon Hay Architects. Since 1927, Virginia Creeper has grown on the two street facades of the original building.

ROUTE TWO 49

Civic Theatre

267 Queen Street
Behring, Taylor & Johnson, 1929
Historic Place Category 1



Entrepreneur Thomas O'Brien developed a chain of cinemas around New Zealand in the 1920s. Evidently, he had the gift of the gab: at the end of the decade he persuaded a bank to lend him — unlikely for a beguilingly for Auckland — the huge sum of £180,000 to build the country's biggest picture theatre on a prominent Queen Street corner. In this golden age of film — the talkies were the latest thing — the escapism of the movies was complemented by the fantasy settings of the new "atmospheric" picture palaces. O'Brien engaged Melbourne cinema specialist Behring, Taylor & Johnson to design the Civic Theatre, and young project architect Thomas Leighton (1905–1990) was dispatched to Auckland, along with scenic artist Arnold Zimmermann (1897–1985). The Bauhaus-trained Zimmermann, who later worked on Sydney's Luna Park and Anzac Memorial, did not hold back on the Civic. Exuberant motifs on the Art Deco building include sunbursts, scrolls and dancing maidens; the interior is a concoction of Moorish walled gardens, Persian minarets and plaster-cast Buddhas and elephants, topped off, above the 2700-seat main auditorium, by a rendering of the night sky, twinkling with stars.

ROUTE THREE 48



Ironbank

150–154 Karangahape Road
RTA Studio, 2009

When completed in 2009, Ironbank was the first significant new piece of architecture to appear on K Road in a generation, and it prefigured the street's gradual but accelerating revival. Designed by RTA Studio, an innovative practice founded in 1999 by Richard Nash and Tim Melville, Ironbank is a complex building that addresses the very different conditions of the streets that bound it. On its north side, the building's low profile and glass-fronted reinforced-concrete facade refers to its Victorian and Kiwiana K Road neighbours, but on its southern side (shown here) the building rises dramatically above workaday Cross Street, presenting itself as three air-stone towers of steel-clad boxes. The stacking is sleek and looks a little precarious — if those were containers down at the port you'd suspect a crane operator had been working under the influence. Ironbank is a particularly expressive example of the often striking architecture commissioned by its owner, a family-owned landlord company with a periodic inclination to embark on a (well-coined) design adventure.

ROUTE FOUR 59

Mackelvie Street Precinct

Ponsonby Road and Mackelvie Street
RTA Studio, 2012



The Mackelvie Street Precinct is an adept exercise in placemaking that, through the creation of laneways and small courtyards, weaves together small, separately-strengthened buildings on Ponsonby Road and a row of new sympathetically scaled shops and commercial tenancies around the corner on Mackelvie Street. RTA Studio director Richard Nash has made a specialty of inserting new buildings into the fabric of Auckland's old inner-city suburbs. He's not afraid of a bit of ornament, seeing an expressive facade as one way to make contextual connections in neighbourhoods that retain heritage buildings from a more decorative time. On Mackelvie Street, the little strip of north-facing shops tip their roofs to the afternoon sun. The treatment of the shops' white cement-sheer facades may be inspired by the pressed-in ceilings of their Victorian and Edwardian neighbours, but on a blue-sky day the effect is more exotic. It's a long way from Mackelvie Street to Morocco, but the pattern of the perforations carries just a suggestion of the soul.

ROUTE SIX 155