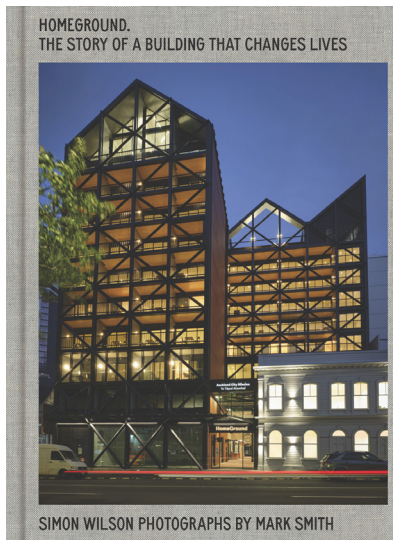




HomeGround

The story of a building that changes lives

SIMON WILSON



\$65

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A PLACE FOR HOPE AND TRANSFORMATION

A celebration of HomeGround, the Auckland City Mission's unique and visionary wrap-around social services complex, which opened in early 2022 after being a dream for over 20 years.

Photographed by Mark Smith and with text by both renowned writer Simon Wilson and Professor Deidre Brown and Dr Karamia Muller of the School of Architecture at the University of Auckland, it is the portrait of a remarkable building designed by leading architecture practice Stevens Lawson.

This book represents an enduring record of a remarkable building built for a remarkable organisation, created through the aroha and vision of many. It documents and records a key moment in Aotearoa New Zealand, when a visionary social services agency, a committed architecture practice, courageous funders, and skilled construction specialists combined forces to create a facility that will transform the delivery of services to, and create hope for a better future for, Auckland's most vulnerable.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Simon Wilson is one of New Zealand's best-known journalists. The former editor of *Cuisine* and *Metro* magazines and Auckland editor for *The Spinoff*, he is now a senior writer at *The New Zealand Herald*. He is a regular writer on urban and social issues.

Professor Deidre Brown (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu) is an art historian and architectural lecturer. She is head of the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Auckland and a governor of the Arts Foundation of New Zealand, a member of the Māori Trademarks Advisory Committee of the Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand, and a member of the Humanities Panel of the Marsden Fund. In 2021 she was made a Fellow of the Royal Society Te Apārangi.

Dr Karamia Muller is a Pacific academic who lectures at the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Auckland. Her research specialises in the meaningful 'indigenisation' of creative practices and design methodologies invested in building futures resistant to inequality.

SALES POINTS

- A varied audience, from those interested in cutting-edge contemporary architecture to those concerned about grave social issues
- Expert, insightful text
- Handsome design, in the tradition of other award-winning books from Massey University Press about architecture and design
- Beautiful photographs by Mark Smith

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Albany Campus, Private Bag 102904,
North Shore 0745, Auckland, New Zealand

Email editor@masseypress.ac.nz
Phone +64 9 213 6886
www.masseypress.ac.nz

Media contact

Sarah Thornton, Thornton Communications
Email sarah.thornton@prcomms.com
Phone (09) 479 8763 or 021 753744



1

'SOMETHING ENORMOUSLY BIG AND HAIRY'

I was in America and I got a phone call. They said, "Look, we're recruiting for the Auckland City Mission, they're looking for a chief executive and your name popped up. Would you be interested?"

It was 2015 and Chris Fawley was in Boston on a sabbatical at Harvard when he was studying conflict resolution. The conversation led him to say, "that as a matter we're not good at resolving conflict. I should be there to get a degree in mediation, then he got accepted into the Harvard course. This was going to be more his previous field and he wanted to make a difference at the top, offering his skills in mediation and conflict resolution to business, politics, business and wider society. He loved that course. "It was really amazing, I was working alongside people from trouble spots all over the world, trying to break through the win/lose approach and find another way." But he got the call to look in another direction.

The Mission was established by the Anglican Church in 1920 to provide food, shelter, medical care, social support and other services to those in need in Auckland. Fawley, by some lights, was not an obvious choice to run it. A quietly spoken older British man with soft, wavy features, he's a former Catholic priest, now married with adult kids and grandchildren. Prior to that call, he says, he had not had anything to do with the Mission. Until early 2016 he was in charge of health providers with a large rural catchment in Northland, not big-city work at all. By other lights, though, Fawley was a very good fit.

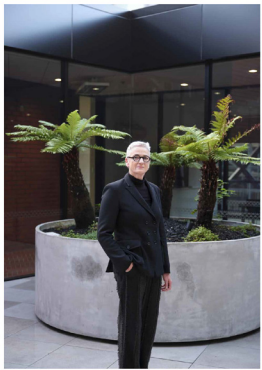
I realised it was ironic, he says. "I'd completed 13 years in the New Zealand job, it was probably the last time, and my whole life has been working in the margins. I'd worked overseas for a long time in that space, where you're essential but not central. I'd got some skills that are and I've certainly got a heart in that area. I thought, this is it, I'll have one more job left in me and then, together, a lifetime of experience and long growing understanding of Te Tiriti and call to create authentic partnerships."

24 The Honeymoon House from the Harbour.

17



15 Chris Fawley has worked with the City Mission for over 10 years. He has a heart in the right place.



3

WHERE EVERYBODY KNOWS YOUR NAME

What's the first sign of a circulation? The anthropologist Margaret Mead was asked that question, and she answered in kind of her answer. "People were expecting her to say a trail or something but she said, "A hand! A hand!" It was a culture where you might break your leg but you would not be left to die. You were brought in and looked after. That was the answer."

The first thing at the Mission, says Chris Fawley, and this is really important, the first thing that you must have everybody's name. And all those by their name. That takes a lot of work and it creates a relationship because it recognises the name of the other person. So the special thing the Mission has is its relationship with the people. They're not just donors, or a trustee, who come in for a meal and your thinking, "Who the hell is that?"

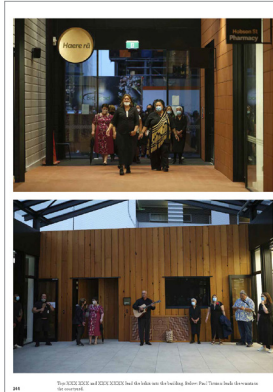
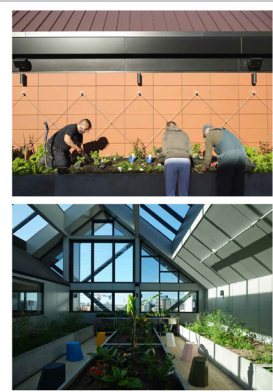
It wasn't always like that. In the 1950s there was the old Jews. People would come in, they would have to wait. Some came because a number. When it was available we would then be allowed food and all out the number. And people would line up. If you've had a history of being incarcerated, what is that going to be like for you?"

Fawley agrees. The years ago, I would have had our old building on Hulton Street was not a great space for most people to be in. We had the police in there every few days, it was ugly, but even in that challenging environment, we did our best to offer welcome and care.

They thought that when they moved out of Hulton Street and into their temporary premises up the road and round the corner in Union Street, that the Honeymoon House would be right. "We had a beautiful scheme and we rethought how it would. And it was rare for us to call the police in the three years we were there. Experience taught us that environment influences and impacts on people. And this led to us design something that recognises the name of all. Emotional and beauty and not outcomes."

24 Chris Fawley, the Mission's chief executive, has a heart in the right place.

20



Then in March 2008 the Minister of Health took up a proposal that originated at the 10th anniversary in 1998 to bring the medical district services into Honeymoon House. The existing medical district was housed in an old Centennial Hospital building in Pines Crescent, now called Pines House, and it wasn't fit for purpose. The ministry approached expanding the number of dental beds and putting them all in one place, with one floor of the building dedicated to the Mission's social services, as the plans formed, and another added for the CHRF medical device beds. This would allow the two services to integrate their work.

In effect, there would be a secure hospital unit inside Honeymoon House and it would become the home of managed palliative services in Auckland. Some rooms in the building would move in and out of the facility, but it would be there for all who need it, regardless of where they lived, and the building would be integrated. "That approach is best practice around the world," says Fawley. "And they took the opportunity. It was a surprise but it was the right thing to do."

Ahrens, who was 10 days away from going back to her daughter's house, was in Auckland with Chris Fawley, a reality she felt from the back of the old Mission, with the architect's model right there on display, the statement of the plan. She also attended the new building there would be an extra 200 beds for the dental floor, with the money to come from the Friends of Christ Church.

It was the breakthrough they had hoped for. "I think we got a work's notice about that," says Chris Fawley. "But it was amazing. They didn't have to get more money allocated through the health budget – it was already there." It also meant the Labour-led government, like its predecessor, now had faith in the game. "It was in Wellington was going to be Honeymoon House."

Not everyone was happy about the extra floor. "When we called the architect, says Chikovsky, some people thought some down the plan. Steve's Levens suddenly had a lot more work to do. Fawley explains: "It wasn't just asking a floor, everything had to be changed to fit in. The foundations, everything. Even the internal walls on the new floor they had to be different. And on top of that, it had to be a secure hospital site from the start. The cost was enormous, way out of proportion to the rest. If you did it as a residential building it would have been over that mark."

Not that anything else became easier. Chris Fawley says negotiations with the Ministry for the various government agencies meant it took a year at least to get the fully contract signed. "Chris Fawley, however, was relaxed. Right through the fundraising process, he says, Richard and

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embodiment of the Mission's values, they had said.

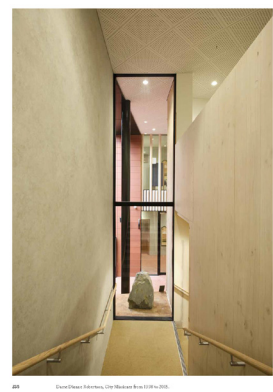
Significant moments stood out for them in the architectural process. One of these was a co-design session delivered over Zoom with the Mission staff. Important lessons from the mission were the need to forge a connection between people and the process and narrative that are more embracing rather than didactic. To get and look sustained other activities events, including the installation of the main stone in the building's foundation – a gift from Nipin Whaka to the Mission's centenary. Later it turned that Chris Fawley's daughter, who attended the ceremony, carried the stone so that it could be touched by all standing before laying it in the ground for health. This process strengthened and deepened the relationship with the building.

The entrance has the sense of a city space that is activated with the people of people through the building. Skies in today bright and architectural details create an instantly related memory. There are terraces on the Federal Street side of the building will ensure that this space is always here. The city's inhabitants are already using the Calder Centre, where a multi-lingual onsite team provides health services, including dental and mental health specialists.

The centre is situated on the ground floor and shares the same entry as the community space, offering those typically institutional places that can often be confusing, especially for those with Pacifica communities. The architect informs us that the centre has been designed with two access points, ensuring staff and client safety is maintained. This sense of safety permeates the centre.

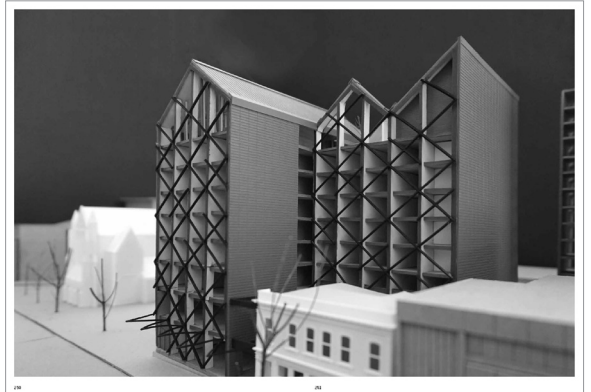
The architect describes the entrance: "As a circulation spine, from which the rest of the building's functions stem. It is the heart of the building. Having a city feeling as a circulation spine brings the language of the city into the building. Institutional spaces associated with medical services often all people into rooms that are difficult to find, and often difficult to navigate. Here, the functions mix in the hallway. Health services take on new associations in this way, and shift how those services support the more holistic community and former Hospital-centred treatment."

Hearts in the ground floor community dining room, which is open to all corners. It is a recognizable space that can expand and contract with changing functions throughout the day. Access from hearts in the adaptable community space, with building design gives flexibility to accommodate social, recreational, education, artistic and activist activities.



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