

Parnell – A Dozen Delights

A self-guided walk past historic buildings of Parnell, Auckland's oldest suburb.



1. WHITBY LODGE, 330 Parnell Road
 Many claims have been made for the early origin of this house, but Stacpoole reports that the recorded evidence points to its having been built around 1874 for Fraser of Fraser & Tinne, engineers, on land acquired from Hulme Court. Its stone construction is of special interest.

2. HULME COURT, 350 Parnell Road
 Believed to be the oldest Auckland building on its original site. This elegant house in the Regency manner was built in 1843 for Sir Frederick Whitaker, later Attorney General and Premier. Constructed of bluestone (which has since been plastered) it has a hipped slate roof, and was one surrounded by a finely detailed trellis work veranda, now partly obscured by additions. It was purchased by Lieutenant Colonel Hulme, commander of the local British forces. In the 1850s it served temporarily as Government House, and later Bishop Selwyn lived here.

3. PARNELL LIBRARY BUILDING, 390 Parnell Road
 Designed by architect M K Draffin, in the classical manner, and built in 1924. Attached was a community hall, which contains a highly attractive and colourful plaster ceiling. Prior to the construction of the library, a fire tower stood on the site, and the local library was housed in the Parnell Council buildings across the road.

4. KEMPS DEPARTMENT STORE, 413-427 Parnell Road
 Commanding the junction of St Stephens Avenue with Parnell Road is the handsome wooden building that was Kemps Department Store. Now with five ground floor shops below the veranda, its facade above shows a strong pattern of arched windows in pairs under pediments. Kemps Store operated as merchants, tailors, drapers, milliners and mercers, with workrooms upstairs. It was established in 1885 and was considered the best all round store in Auckland. It was said to have "wakened up sleepy Parnell to a sense of what up to date business premises should be like".

5. SELWYN LIBRARY, BISHOPS COURT, 8 St Stephens Avenue
 A group of beautiful wooden buildings built 1861-63 to the design of Frederick Thatcher in his characteristic timber Gothic style. First came the library, then the

adjoining baptistry and bell tower, then the Bishop's house and chapel, all grouped round an entrance court open on one side. John Stacpoole calls it "a most remarkable piece of planning" and refers to "Thatcher's felicities of ingeniously controlled roofs, introduced gables, and windows... he made full use of roofs of broken pitch - roofs which flatten out toward the eaves."

6. NELIGAN HOUSE, 12 St Stephens Avenue

Designed as a new Bishops court in the Arts and Crafts style by architects Bamford & Pierce, it was built 1908-10 on part of the site purchased in 1843 by Bishop Selwyn. The front of the house contains a private chapel. In 1940 it was converted to a boarding house called Strathmore Lodge. Restored in 1990, it is now the Anglican Trust Board's offices.

7. THE DEANERY, 17 St Stephens Avenue

Completed in 1857, it is one of Frederick Thatcher's earliest buildings, a small house but quite a complex one. The stonework (from Rangitoto) stops at first floor level. The building has been little altered, though the roof was originally shingles. Selwyn lived there before he moved to Bishops Court. It was never used as a Deanery.

8. ST MARY'S IN HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL, 420-432 Parnell Road

"One of the finest of all wooden churches in New Zealand", says Stacpoole, "and regarded by some as Mountfort's ecclesiastical masterpiece. It shows his mastery of the Gothic style and his ability to create magical spaces using the simplest means". The lofty interior is an extremely fine example of timber construction. It was built between 1886 and 1897, on the other side of Parnell Road. In 1982 it was moved across the road to its present site next to the cathedral.

9. TERRACE HOUSES, 469-473 Parnell Road

A really handsome set of three terrace houses, distinguished by a black painted facade and brickwork sides festooned with Virginia creeper.

10. CLAYBROOK, 6 Claybrook Road

Designed in 1843 and owned by architect Sampson Kempthorne, it is one of the oldest houses on its original site in Auckland. The house had an original core which may have been a prefabricated house Kempthorne had brought with him. Kempthorne arrived in Auckland in 1842 and purchased the land close to the Domain, in Auckland's second land purchase.

11. KINDER HOUSE, 2 Ayr Street

This was the first and largest of three stone houses in Parnell designed by Frederick Thatcher in the late 1850s, and the only truly two-storeyed one. It was built by the stonemason, Benjamin Strange, as the headmaster's house for the Church of England Grammar School, and named for its first and most distinguished occupant, Dr Kinder, well known as a water colourist and pioneer photographer. The house, now owned by Auckland City, is administered as a gallery/museum by the Kinder House Society Inc.

Open Mon-Sat 11.00am-3.00pm.

12. EWELME COTTAGE, 14 Ayr Street

A house museum, owned jointly by Auckland City and the Historic Places Trust. Ewelme Cottage was built in 1863 for Vicesimus Lush, who brought plans for a wooden house from England in 1850. "The cottage was much added to and altered, but these alterations are themselves typical of the better kind of unpretentious colonial house which grew with the needs of the family. Its north facing veranda and french windows are typical of the simple grace so often found at that time" (Stacpoole). Though Vicar of Howick, Lush chose to build in Parnell so that his sons could attend the Church of England Grammar School. His family lived there until 1968.

Open Wed-Sun 10.30am-12 noon & 1.00pm-4.30pm.

Parnell Inc.

259a Parnell Road. PO Box 37-072, Parnell, Auckland 1.
p. 09 379 0606 f. 09 379 0953 m. 027 601 0641 e. info@parnell.net.nz
www.parnell.net.nz

