

## **Warehouse (Former)**

25-29 Allen Street



(Image: *Charles Collins* – 2014)

### **Summary of heritage significance**

- 25-29 Allen Street is an unusual example of an Art Deco warehouse building. It is notable for its simple and relatively unadorned façade.
- This building has an important townscape role as an element of the Blair/Allen Street precinct of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century masonry warehouses, and contributes to the Courtenay Place Heritage Area.
- This building is associated with the historic redevelopment of the former slum area surrounding Allen and Grainger streets following them being placed under control of the Harbour Board. It is also associated with the fruit and produce markets.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 10/7
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP 17163
Heritage Area:	Allen and Blair Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	N/A
Archaeological Site:	NZAA R27/270 Central City Archaeological Area
Other Names:	The Apartment Bar
Key physical dates:	Built: 1936
Architect / Builder:	Architect: Bernard W. Johns. Builder: Christian and Neilson. Consulting Engineer: Phillip S. Allen.
Former uses:	Commercial/industrial – Warehouse
Current uses:	Commercial – Restaurant/bar
Earthquake Prone Status:	Not Earthquake Prone – SR 169676

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



## 1.0 Outline History

### 1.1 History

Formerly a slum area, the district surrounding Allen and Blair Streets was redeveloped from 1898-1904 after the land came under the control of the Harbour Board. With preparations to install the new electric tram network in hand and the Te Aro railway station located nearby, the Harbour Board decided to turn the area into a market. The area's fortunes soon rose with the construction of warehouses along the lengths of Allen and Blair Streets.<sup>1</sup> Between 1904 and 1906 a variety of warehouse buildings were constructed along both sides of Allen and Blair Streets. These warehouses were used for storage and auctions. They were two or three-stories high with a variety of street facades, some more ornate than others. In many of the stores markets and auctions were held on the ground floor with offices on the floors above.<sup>2</sup> Allen and Blair Streets bustled with vendors, merchants and numerous vehicles loading and unloading produce and other marketable goods.

The site of this building was originally owned by the Wellington Harbour Board, which had transferred the property to Percy Edward Palmer, a farmer from Levin in 1903. Palmer owned the site until 1920, and it appears that he had constructed a building on the site already when he sold to Allen Street Buildings Ltd as the plans feature an existing basement. Based on the Stones and Wises Wellington directories, it appears that the building was primarily associated with fruit and produce merchants, which is a typical use for this area, and the primary tenant was Pope A & Co. Ltd., who occupied the building between 1940 and 1972 (Stones 1940 - 1945; Wises 1971-2).

The building at 25-29 Allen Street was constructed to the 1936 design of architect Bernard W. Johns by builders Christian and Neilson for an estimated cost of £3,200 for Allen Street Buildings Ltd. This is one of the last of the warehouses that were constructed in the Blair and Allen Street precinct.

The building was constructed as a warehouse, with a cart dock with roller shutter doors taking up most of the street frontage. The front section of the building was two storeys and had offices on the first floor. The façade has a row of three windows with a plain horizontal hood over them and a stepped parapet above. The original drawings also show a tiled façade with Art Deco motifs present in the ventilation grills and over the office door. The building was constructed in reinforced concrete with steel trusses spanning the width of the building.

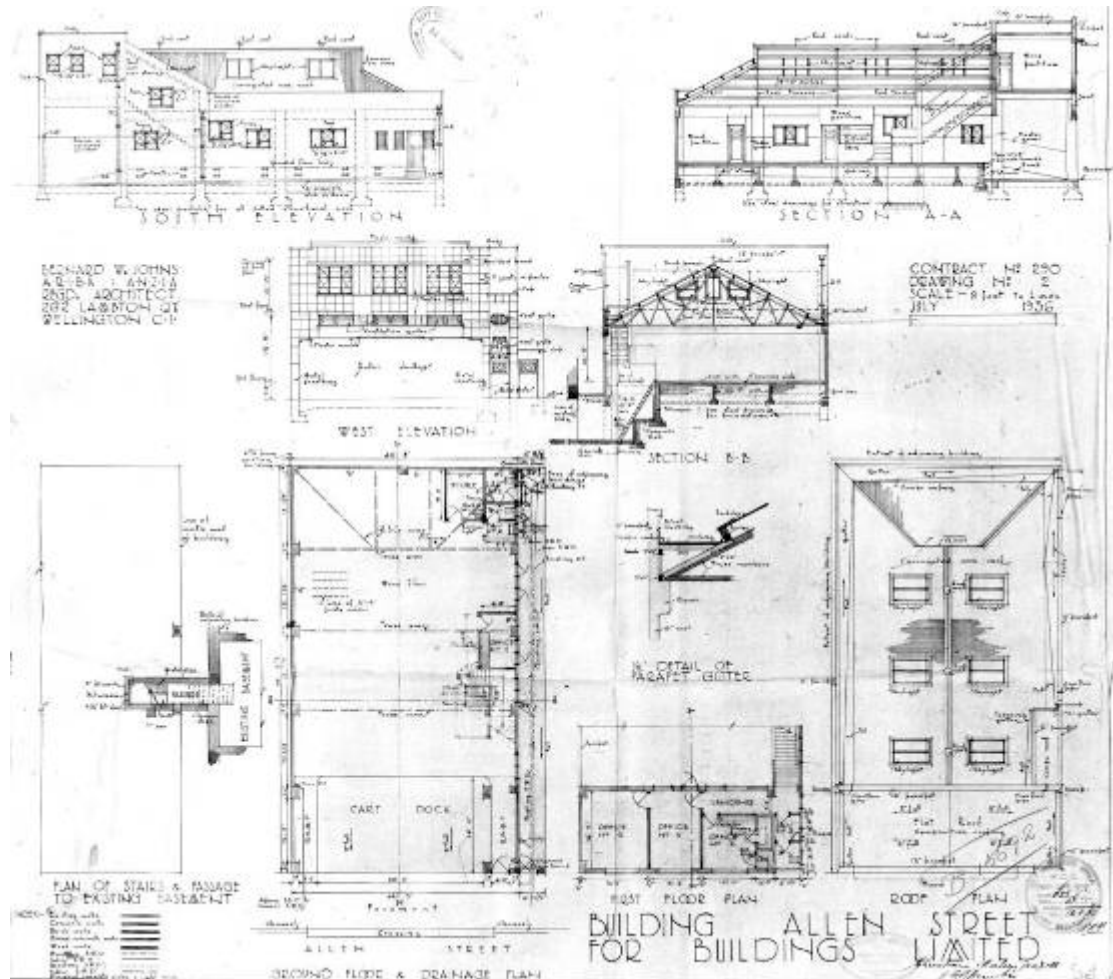
Since the 1980s, as Courtenay Place has increasingly developed into the entertainment district, this building has primarily been used to house restaurants and bars. It currently is the home of 'The Apartment' bar.

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<sup>1</sup> Wellington City Council, 'Allen and Blair Streets,' *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings* (Wellington City Council, 2001), ALLEN & BLAIR.

<sup>2</sup> Wellington City Council, "Courtenay Arms", *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. (Wellington City Council, 2001), AL&BL8.

## 1.2 Timeline of modifications



WCA 00056: 179: B15692: 001

- 1936 Construction of building (00056: 179: B15692)
- 1965 Alterations – office alterations (00058: 418: C17877)
- 1995 Alterations and additions – restaurant alterations (00061: 102: 13297)

## 1.3 Ownership history

The Wellington Harbour Board (CTWN124/128).

- 1903 Transfer the Wellington Harbour Board to Percy Edward Palmer of Levin, farmer, 2/9/1903 (CTWN124/128).
- 1920 Transfer Percy Edward Palmer to Buildings Ltd., 15/2/1920 (CTWN124/128).
- 1927 Mortgage Buildings Limited to the Bank of NZ, 27/1/1927 (CTWN124/128).
- 1953 Transfer Buildings Limited to Alexander Maule Pope, Lot 1 DP 17163, 9/12/1953 (CTWN124/128).

- 1953 New certificate of title issued to Alexander Maule Pope of Wellington, auctioneer, 9/12/1953 (CTWN602/209).
- 1961 Transmission to Donald Alexander Pope of Wellington, auctioneer, 20/11/1961.
- 1963 Transfer to Ethel Pretoria Pope, widow, 31/5/1963 (CTWN602/209).
- 1974 Transfer to George Thomas & Co. Ltd., 1/7/1974.
- 1985 Transfer to Allen Blair Properties Ltd., 31/1/1985.
- 1993 Transfer to Dayal Holdings Ltd., 1/7/1993.
- 2006 Transfer to current owners Michael John Lucas Cole, Kathleen Imelda Tipler & John Renwick Harkness, 7/2/2006 (CTWN602/209).

#### **1.4 Occupation history**

- 1940-1972 25-29 Allen St: Pope A & Co. Ltd., fruit & produce merchants (Stones 1940 - 1945; Wises 1971-2).

#### **1.5 Architect**

##### **Bernard W. Johns**

Bernard Johns is a Wellington architect who worked predominantly between the 1930s and 1960s. He is primarily known for his domestic architecture, having designed a number of private homes in Wellington. It appears that he was involved in the design of at least one building in Hastings following the 1931 earthquake as his name is on plans for a building at 211 Heretaunga Street East, Hastings, a 1931 plain commercial building in the Art Deco tradition.<sup>3</sup>

#### **2.0 Physical description**

##### **2.1 Architecture**

This building is a good example of a plain commercial building influenced by the Art Deco style. It is little-decorated, with some stylised ornamentation, a linear emphasis, and stepped forms. There is an emphasis in this building on horizontality. The building was constructed as a warehouse, with a cart dock with roller shutter doors taking up most of the street frontage. The front section of the building was two-storeys and had offices on the first floor. The façade has a row of three windows with a plain horizontal hood over them and a stepped parapet above. The original drawings also show a rendered façade with Art Deco motifs present in the ventilation grills and over the office door. 'V' joints in the surface of the render divide the façade into square blocks and give the illusion of a tiled finish.

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<sup>3</sup> Sarah Atkins and Chris Cochran, 'Hastings CND Heritage Inventory project', 18 April 2012, accessed 21 June 2013, [http://www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/files/all/documents/hastings\\_cbd\\_inventory/group3/63.%20Commercial%20Buildings%20\(Group%203\).pdf](http://www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/files/all/documents/hastings_cbd_inventory/group3/63.%20Commercial%20Buildings%20(Group%203).pdf)

## **2.2 Materials**

The building was constructed in reinforced concrete with steel trusses spanning the width of the building.

## **2.3 Setting**

The building at 25-29 Allen Street is on the eastern side of the Allen Street block. It is adjoined to the left by the 1905 Wellington Produce Exchange Building, and to the right the 1900 former 'Rod's Block' that now houses 'Mishmosh' Bar. Allen Street is made up of a number of former warehouse buildings associated with the fruit and produce markets.

The Blair and Allen Street precinct is remarkable for its homogeneity. They provide the most consistent and uniform streetscape views of any part of the commercial business district of Wellington. They are mostly designed in the functional tradition, and were constructed for utilitarian purposes of produce markets and warehouses.

## **Sources**

Atkins, Sarah and Chris Cochran. 'Hastings CBD Heritage Inventory project'. 18 April 2012. Accessed 21 June 2013,

[http://www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/files/all/documents/hastings\\_cbd\\_inventory/group3/63.%20Commercial%20Buildings%20\(Group%203\).pdf](http://www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/files/all/documents/hastings_cbd_inventory/group3/63.%20Commercial%20Buildings%20(Group%203).pdf)

Wellington City Council. *Courtenay Place Heritage Area spreadsheet (Part 3)*. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006

Wellington City Council. *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings – Precincts*. Wellington City Council 2001.

## **Wellington City Archive**

00056: 179: B15692

00058: 418: C17877

00061: 102: 13297

## **Stones and Wises Wellington Directories**

Stones 1940 - 1945; Wises 1971-2

## **LINZ**

CTWN602/209

CTWN124/128

## Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance

### **Cultural heritage values**

#### **Aesthetic Value:**

**Architectural:** *Does the item have architectural or artistic value for characteristics that may include its design, style, era, form, scale, materials, colour, texture, patina of age, quality of space, craftsmanship, smells, and sounds?*

25-29 Allen Street is an unusual example of an Art Deco warehouse building. It is notable for its simple and relatively unadorned façade.

**Townscape:** *Does the item have townscape value for the part it plays in defining a space or street; providing visual interest; its role as a landmark; or the contribution it makes to the character and sense of place of Wellington?*

This building has an important townscape role as an element of the Blair/Allen Street precinct of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century masonry warehouses.

**Group:** *Is the item part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use?*

The building contributes to the Courtenay Place Heritage Area, which is made up of a group of late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial buildings, and features the distinctive Blair and Allen Street warehouse precinct.

#### **Historic Value:**

**Association:** *Is the item associated with an important person, group, or organisation?*

**Association:** *Is the item associated with an important historic event, theme, pattern, phase, or activity?*

This building is associated with the historic redevelopment of the former slum area surrounding Allen and Grainger streets following them being placed under control of the Harbour Board. It is also associated with the fruit and produce markets.

#### **Scientific Value:**

**Archaeological:** *Does the item have archaeological value for its ability to provide scientific information about past human activity?*

This building is included in the NZAA Central City archaeological area R27/270.

**Educational:** *Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate about aspects of the past?*

**Technological:** *Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?*

#### **Social Value:**

**Public esteem:** *Is the item held in high public esteem?*

**Symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual:** *Does the item have symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual or other cultural value for the community who has used and continues to use it?*



***Identity/Sense of place/Continuity:***

*Is the item a focus of community, regional, or national identity?*

*Does the item contribute to sense of place or continuity?*

Because the building's architectural style is in keeping with that found in the Allen and Blair Street Precincts it contributes to the precinct's sense of place.

***Sentiment/Connection:*** *Is the item a focus of community sentiment and connection?*

**Level of cultural heritage significance**

***Rare:*** *Is the item rare, unique, unusual, seminal, influential, or outstanding?*

***Representative:*** *Is the item a good example of the class it represents?*

This building is a representative example of a plain utilitarian warehouse building constructed in the Art Deco tradition. As one of the last warehouse buildings to be constructed on Allen Street it is representative of its time and the building techniques, materials, and designs that were common.

***Authentic:*** *Does the item have authenticity or integrity because it retains significant fabric from the time of its construction or from later periods when important additions or modifications were carried out?*

The building has retained a significant amount of its exterior fabric which gives it authenticity.

***Local/Regional/National/International***

*Is the item important for any of the above characteristics at a local, regional, national, or international level?*

The building is of local importance as its architecture and history contributes to the overall historic and stylistic value of the Allen and Blair Street Precinct.

### 3.0 Appendix

#### Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
WCC Records – building file		
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)		
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
Plan change?		
Heritage Area Report		
Heritage Area Spreadsheet		
Heritage items folder (electronic)		
HPT website		
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		

#### Background research

*Insert any relevant background information into this section. This may include:*

- *Additional plans, such as those for alterations*
- *Chunks of text from other sources such as Cyclopedia of NZ, Papers Past*
- *Additional images*