

The Boys' Institute Building (Former)

30 Arthur Street



The Boy's Institute (Image: Charles Collins - 2015)

Summary of heritage significance

- Built in 1906, the building is architecturally unusual in that it features a mixture of Edwardian Revivalism, Stripped Classicism and Gothic styles.
- The building is historically associated with the Wellington Boys' Institute, an interdenominational charity movement which sought to assist working class boys in their spiritual, physical and mental development.
- The building is the only remaining structure on the north side of Arthur Street and acts a reminder of how the street once looked prior to the development of the 2005 Inner City Bypass.

District Plan:	Lot 18 Deed 28
Legal Description:	SEC 27 SO 384847
Heritage Area:	No
HPT Listed:	Not registered
Archaeological Site:	Central City NZAA R27/270 Māori site of significance
Other Names:	Boys' Institute
Key physical dates:	1906 1947 2005
Architect / Builder:	William Gray Young (Crichton and McKay)
Former uses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellington Boys' Institute Recording studio
Current uses:	Vacant (2005)
Earthquake Prone Status:	SR 223346 - expires 15/06/2027 (124 Served)

Extent:



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

As the original commercial quarter of the Wellington settlement, Te Aro was predominantly the home of the city's working class.¹ As an institution dedicated to overseeing the spiritual, physical and mental wellbeing of working class boys, it was therefore fitting that the Boys Institute was relocated to Arthur Street. Originating as a subsidiary branch of the YMCA, the Boys Institute started to operate as a separate entity in 1892 after constructing its own building on the corner of Cuba and Victoria Streets.² When the Tramway Works took over this land the Institute was forced to look for new premises. A new site was found on Arthur Street and £600 was raised to construct a new building.

Designed by William Gray Young, who was then working for the firm of Crichton and McKay, the new building finally opened in 1906 with his Excellency the Right Honourable William Lee Baron Plunket (1864-1920), Governor of New Zealand, laying the foundation stone.³

The Institute was interdenominational and this allowed for donations to be received from different sectors of society.⁴ The Institute attracted a large number of boys (over 200 in 1911)⁵ and even within a year of opening it had become apparent that the Arthur Street building was too small. Rather than purchase adjoining properties, the Institute instead decided to build an entirely new building on a Tasman Street property that had been donated by Sarah Ann Rhodes in 1910.⁶ Construction on the new building began in 1914.⁷

From the late 1980s onward the building's first floor was home to a studio where over 20 albums were recorded.⁸ It was the base of Plan 9, who composed and recorded the cultural songs of Middle Earth for the Lord of the Rings film trilogy there.⁹

With the development of the Wellington Inner City Bypass in 2005, the building was originally threatened with demolition. This fate was avoided after Transit New Zealand and Building Solutions relocated the building, using Teflon technology and railway tracks,¹⁰ 13 metres north of its original position.¹¹

¹ Erin Menzies, 'Progress v Preservation: a history of Te Aro, Wellington,' accessed August 9 2012, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/resources/pdf/Te-Aro-History.pdf>.

² Cyclopedia of New Zealand, 'The Wellington Boys' Institute,' accessed August 7 2012, <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc01Cycl-t1-body-d4-d20-d19.html>.

³ Wellington City Council, "30 Arthur Street," *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 1995: Non-Residential Buildings*. (Wellington City Council, 1995), A.

⁴ St John's Church Wellington, 'Report of the Kirk session and managers for twelve months ended 30 June 1911,' p.30, accessed September 19 2012, <http://www.stjohnsinthecity.org.nz/about/documents/1909-10.pdf>.

⁵ St John's Church Wellington, 'Report of the Kirk session and managers for twelve months ended 30 June 1912,' p.30, accessed September 19 2012, <http://www.stjohnsinthecity.org.nz/about/documents/1909-10.pdf>.

⁶ Transit New Zealand, 'Wellington City Inner Bypass: 30 Arthur Street History,' accessed 19 September 2012, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/30-Arthur.html>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ David Donaldson, '30 Arthur Street,' (2007), accessed September 19 2012, <http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/30-arthur-street-2007>.

⁹ Plan 9 Music, 'Film,' accessed September 19 2012, http://www.plan9music.co.nz/plan9_film.htm.

¹⁰ Transit New Zealand, 'Wellington City Inner Bypass: 30 Arthur Street History.'

¹¹ Ibid.



30 Arthur Street, 1934. An aerial view of Wellington. Negatives of the Evening Post newspaper. Ref: 1/2-122291-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

1.2 Timeline of Modifications

- 1906 Construction of building (00053:131:7322)
- 1947 Reinstatement and repairs following earthquake damage (00056:331:B25781)
- 2005 Relocation of building to rear of property (00078:1645:132653)

1.3 Ownership history

- 1906 Boys' Institute Wellington.
- 1922 Woolston Jennings Ltd and the National Chemical Company Ltd.
- 1927 National Chemical Company Ltd.
- 1955 The Union Bank of Australia Ltd.
- 1990 The Crown.

1.4 Occupation history

- 1906 Boys' Institute Wellington.
- 1922 Occupancy unknown – further research required
- c.1987 Music studio

1.5 Architect

William Gray Young (1885-1962) was born in Oamaru. When he was a child his family moved to Wellington where he was educated. After leaving school he was articled to the Wellington architectural firm of Crichton and McKay. In 1906 he won a competition for the design of Knox College, Dunedin, and shortly after this he commenced practice on his own account. He became a prominent New Zealand

architect and during a career of 60 years he designed over 500 buildings. His major buildings include the Wellington and Christchurch Railway Stations (1936 and 1954 respectively), Scot's College (1919), Phoenix Assurance Building (1930) and the Australian Mutual Provident Society (AMP) Chambers (1950). At Victoria University College of Wellington he was responsible for the Stout (1930), Kirk (1938), and Easterfield (1957) buildings, and Weir House (1930). Gray Young also achieved recognition for his domestic work such as the Elliott House Wellington, (1913). His design for the Wellesley Club (1925) earned him the Gold Medal of the New Zealand Institute of Architects in 1932. He was elected a Fellow of the Institute in 1913, served on the executive committee from 1914-35 and was President from 1935-36. He was also elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and achieved prominence in public affairs.¹²

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

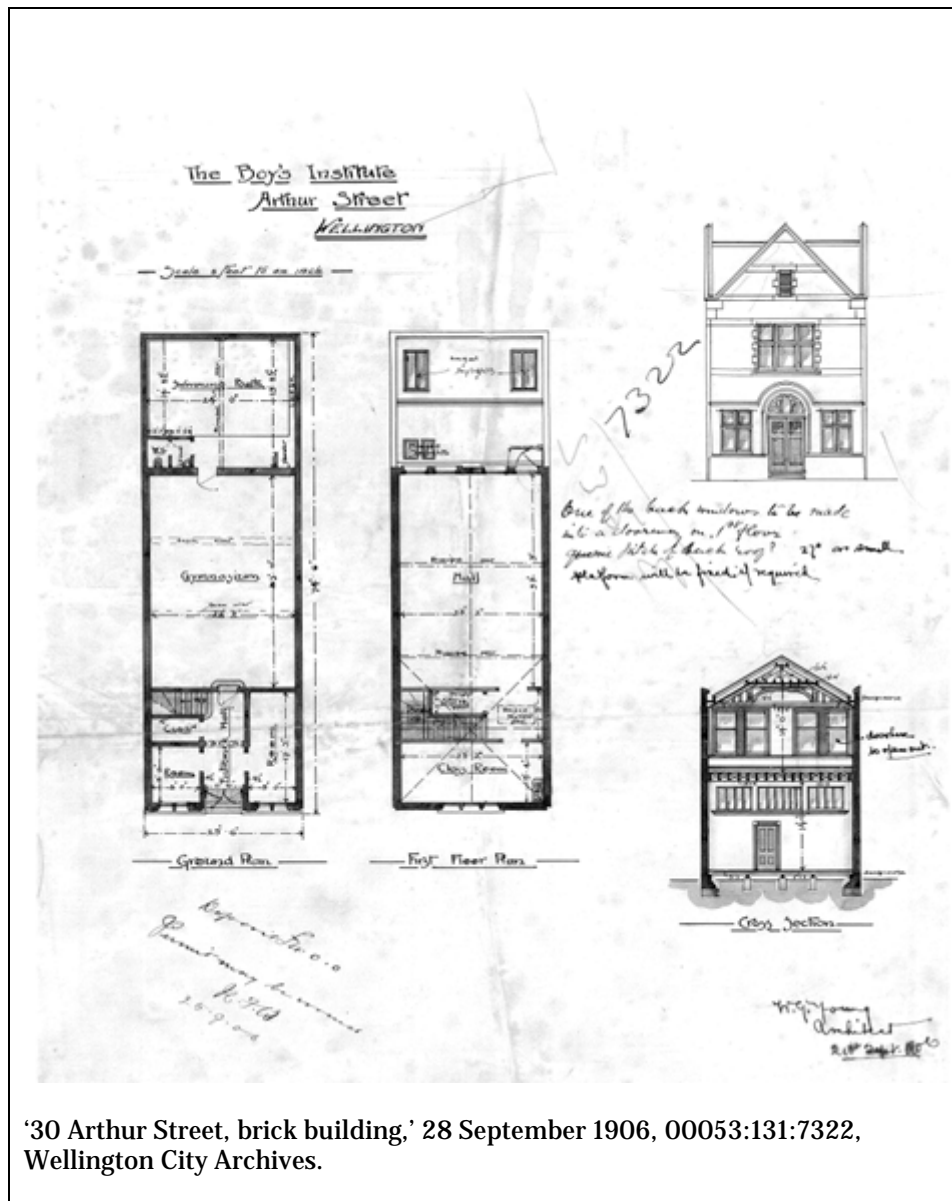
The former Boys' Institute is a two storey, brick masonry building with a group of three deep set casement windows on the first floor and a central arched doorway flanked by a pair of deep set casement windows on the ground floor. The original plans for the building show that its front façade was designed in an Edwardian revivalist style – in this case, Jacobean. This style was characterised by the tall brick gabled end and the deep set casement windows fitted between heavy “stone” mullions. The elevated gables (there were four in all) were employed at the southern or street end of the building.

The gables were probably removed after the 1942 Wairarapa earthquake¹³ as aerial photographs show that the gables were there in 1924 and gone by 1958. Their removal has obscured the building's architectural origins but the heavily-articulated facade is still intact on its ground and first floors.

The ground floor of the building accommodated a gymnasium and indoor swimming pool with a classroom and hall on the floor above.

¹² New Zealand Historic Places Trust Professional Biographies, 'William Gray Young,' accessed September 19 2012, <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Gray+Young.+William>.

¹³ Permit 00056:331:B25781 issued in 1947 was for reinstatement due to earthquake damage.



'30 Arthur Street, brick building,' 28 September 1906, 00053:131:7322, Wellington City Archives.

2.2 Materials

- Brick masonry covered in cement render.

2.3 Setting

The building is situated on Arthur Street which underwent major redevelopment in 2005 with the construction of the Wellington Inner City Bypass. Many buildings along Arthur Street were demolished or removed. Today the former Boys Institute stands alone on the north side of Arthur Street and is the only building that opens directly onto the street.

3.0 Sources

Cyclopedia of New Zealand. 'The Wellington Boys' Institute.' Accessed August 7 2012. <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc01Cycl-t1-body-d4-d20-d19.html>.

Donaldson, David. '30 Arthur Street.' 2007. Accessed September 19 2012. <http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/30-arthur-street-2007>.

Duart, Ilse. 'Losing our heritage: 104 year old building, abandoned and dilapidated.' Accessed September 19 2012. <http://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=28122>.

Menzies, Erin. 'Progress v Preservation: a history of Te Aro Wellington.' Accessed August 9 2012. <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/resources/pdf/Te-Aro-History.pdf>.

New Zealand Historic Places Trust Professional Biographies. 'William Gray Young.' Accessed September 19 2012. <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Gray+Young,+William>.

Plan 9 Music. 'Film.' Accessed September 19 2012. http://www.plan9music.co.nz/plan9_film.htm.

St John's Church Wellington. 'Report of the Kirk session and managers for twelve months ended 30 June 1911.' Accessed September 19 2012. <http://www.stjohnsinthecity.org.nz/about/documents/1909-10.pdf>.

St John's Church Wellington. 'Report of the Kirk session and managers for twelve months ended 30 June 1912.' Accessed September 19 2012. <http://www.stjohnsinthecity.org.nz/about/documents/1909-10.pdf>.

Transit New Zealand. 'Wellington City Inner Bypass: 30 Arthur Street History.' Accessed 19 September 2012. <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/30-Arthur.html>.

Wellington City Council. "30 Arthur Street." *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 1995: Non-Residential Buildings*. Wellington City Council, 1995. A.

Wellington City Archives

'30 Arthur Street, plans.' 28 September 1906. 00053-131-7322.

Newspapers

Evening Post. Volume XC, Issue 70, 21 September 1915. Page 8.

Press. Volume LXVI, Issue 13776, 4 July 1910. Page 7.

4.0 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?

The building features a façade which is a mix of the Edwardian Revivalist (Jacobean) and Stripped Classical styles with eclectic Gothic.

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?

Since the 2005 development of the Inner City Bypass the building now stands alone and is the only remaining building on the north side of Arthur Street.

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?

Historic Value:

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

The building is associated with the Wellington Boys' Institute, an interdenominational charity organisation which sought to improve the spiritual, physical and mental wellbeing of working class boys. It is also associated with the then Governor of New Zealand, William Lee Baron Plunket (1864-1920), who laid the building's foundation stone.

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

The building is historically associated with the efforts undertaken by interdenominational religious organisations that arose in the nineteenth century to provide support and moral guidance to working class boys who had moved into the cities in order to start trades and find work. Because of its location, the building is also associated with the efforts to save the heritage of Te Aro that were the result of the 2005 development of the Wellington Inner City Bypass.

Scientific Value:

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

There was pre-1900 human activity on this site. The building is located in the Central City archaeological site reference NZAA 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?

As the only historic building left on Arthur Street, the former Boys' Institute serves as a reminder of the street's appearance prior to the development of the 2005 Inner City Bypass.

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?*

The building is an unusual mix of Edwardian Revivalism (Jacobean), Stripped Classicism and Gothic styles.

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

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?*

While the building has retained some of its original exterior façade, the gabled roof of its original design has been removed prior to 1958.

Local/Regional/National/International

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

4.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory	Y	
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory	Y	
WCC Records – building file	Y	
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)	Y	

Background research



Andrew Ross, accessed September 19 2012,
http://www.photospace.co.nz/ross_pages/andrew_ross_43.htm.

Messrs. J. H. Bethune and Co. advertise that to-morrow, at 2.30 p.m., at their rooms, Featherston-street, they will submit for sale the large brick building, No. 30, Arthur-street, also the six-roomed dwelling adjoining, No. 28, Arthur-street, formerly used by the Boys' Institute. The brick building stands on a section 25ft 6in x 84ft, and the dwelling house stands on land 25ft x 74ft 6in.

Evening Post, Volume XC, Issue 70, 21 September 1915, Page 8.

A HANDSOME DONATION.**(PRESS ASSOCIATION TELEGRAM.)****WELLINGTON, July 3.**

A donation of £500 in cash and of property valued at £1500 has been made to the Wellington Boys' Institute by a lady, who wishes her identity to remain undisclosed. She has already instructed her lawyers to convey to the Boys' Institute committee property in Tasman street opposite Mt. Cook barracks, and overlooking the Basin Reserve. The money is given for the specific purpose of erecting a home for the working boys of Wellington on the site already mentioned. The present Institute building in Arthur street, notwithstanding the recent acquisition of an adjoining house, has become altogether too small for its members. It has a depth of but 70ft, and the only way in which it could be enlarged is by the purchase of adjoining properties, the prices of which have been found to be far beyond the committee's means. The new site contains an area three times greater than that in Arthur street, and there will be no danger of overcrowding for some time to come. It will allow for the erection of an institute and residential block of buildings, and even then will not be more than half occupied. The situation is described by the president of the Institute as "a strategic position of great importance, and it is even more conveniently situated than the present Institute. As population is gradually departing from the business centres, business premises will take the place of residences." The Institute will now be in a position, he continued, to make a step forward and give effect to the donor's wishes by erecting a boarding establishment for working boys earning not more than 17s a week. The matter of expense has been gone into, and it has been found that it costs 15s a week to board a boy. The committee intend to make no profit—in fact the reverse—for they will charge 12s 6d a week and meet the loss of 2s 6d out of an endowment fund to be established.

Press, Volume LXVI, Issue 13776, 4 July 1910, Page 7.



The Boys Institute Building c.2010.¹⁴

¹⁴Ilse Duart, 'Losing our heritage: 104 year old building, abandoned and dilapidated,' <http://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=28122>, accessed September 19 2012.