

## Paramount Theatre

25-29 Courtenay Place



Photo: *Charles Collins, 2015*

### Summary of heritage significance

- The building is a late Edwardian theatre designed by noted architect James Bennie, and is the only survivor of a number of theatres that Bennie designed.
- The façade, with the parapet added by Bennie in 1927, is authentic above verandah-level and contributes to the streetscape of the Courtenay Place Heritage Area.
- It is the oldest-surviving purpose-built cinema in Wellington and has played an important social and historical role in Wellington's social life.
- It has national significance as it screened the first "talkie" shown in Australasia in 1929, and is presently used as a venue for the International Film Festival and for art-house cinema – still operating under its original name.

District Plan:	Map 16, Symbol Ref 63/3
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP3444, Lot 1 DP3595
Heritage Area:	Courtenay Place Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Historic Places Trust - Category II
Archaeological Site:	Central City NZAA R27/270
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	Built: 1917, Art Deco Façade: 1927
Architect / Builder:	Architect: James Bennie, Builder: W.R. Johns
Former uses:	Cinema/Movie Theatre, Opera House, Theatre, Offices
Current uses:	Cinema/Movie Theatre, Theatre
Earthquake Prone Status:	SR174180 (124 Served)

Extent: Cityview GIS 2012



## 1.0 Outline History

### 1.1 History

The theatre was designed for owner J.J. Williamson, a farmer and landowner from Fielding who had purchased the land for this purpose in 1916.<sup>1</sup> The theatre was designed by architect James Bennie and was erected by day labour under the supervision of W. R. Johns. The original plans do not survive, and this is the only one of a number of theatres that Bennie designed in Wellington that still stands.

The Paramount opened its doors on 4 August 1917 with the sold-out screening of '*Less Than Dust*', starring Mary Pickford. At that time the theatre had a full orchestra pit and provided seating for 885 downstairs and 626 in the circle.<sup>2</sup> A number of small businesses occupied the ground floor, including saddlers, a stationary shop and the Paramount Milk Bar.

The new theatre soon proved popular with Wellingtonians. The *Evening Post* reported on 1 April 1919, that the Paramount 'stands as Wellington's "Theatre of Distinction", and is known as such among the many patrons who favour this house of amusement with their attendance'.<sup>3</sup> The first 'talking picture' shown in New Zealand was at the Paramount Theatre on March 6th, 1929 when moviegoers flocked to see Frank Borzage's '*Street Angel*', a silent picture with a recorded musical soundtrack. As silent movies had usually been accompanied by live music, a recorded soundtrack was a novelty.<sup>4</sup>

In 1953 the Wellington City Council purchased the theatre and land.<sup>5</sup> It remained in their hands until 1960 when it was purchased by the Paramount Theatre Company Ltd, a company formed by four Chinese families to handle their investment.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout this period, the theatre itself was changed quite radically during several renovations. The first major upgrades were undertaken in 1927 at a cost of £12,900. At this time an Art Deco parapet with the words 'PARAMOVNT' was added to the façade.<sup>7</sup> The interior originally comprised of a two level auditorium with 1511 seats, plus retail tenancies on the ground floor and office space at the front of the first floor. The first major changes were made to the interior in 1926, then the 1960s and again in 2004.<sup>8</sup> Today the original seating for some 1200 people on two levels is now reduced to 450 in what was the circle and the movie screen is on top of the former orchestra pit.<sup>9</sup> The exterior ground floor has lost its large, arched, main entrance, but above verandah level the 1927 facade is in authentic condition.

The Paramount Theatre is still operating under its original name. It shows a variety of art-house films and is annually one of the key venues to host the Wellington Film

<sup>1</sup> David Lascelles, *Eighty Turbulent Years: The Paramount Theatre Wellington 1917-1997*, David Lascelles, (Millwood Press, 1997), 88.

<sup>2</sup> 'Never say die for the Paramount', *The Wellingtonian*, 16 September 2004.

<sup>3</sup> 'Paramount Continuous Picture Theatre', *Evening Post*, Volume XCVIII, Issue 76, 1 April 1919, Page 10.

<sup>4</sup> "This Month In History 2012", Historic Places Trust, Accessed: August 2012, <http://www.historic.org.nz/en/TheRegister/MonthHistory/MonthHistory2010.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Wellington City Council, "Paramount Theatre", *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. (Wellington City Council, 2001), COURT 5.

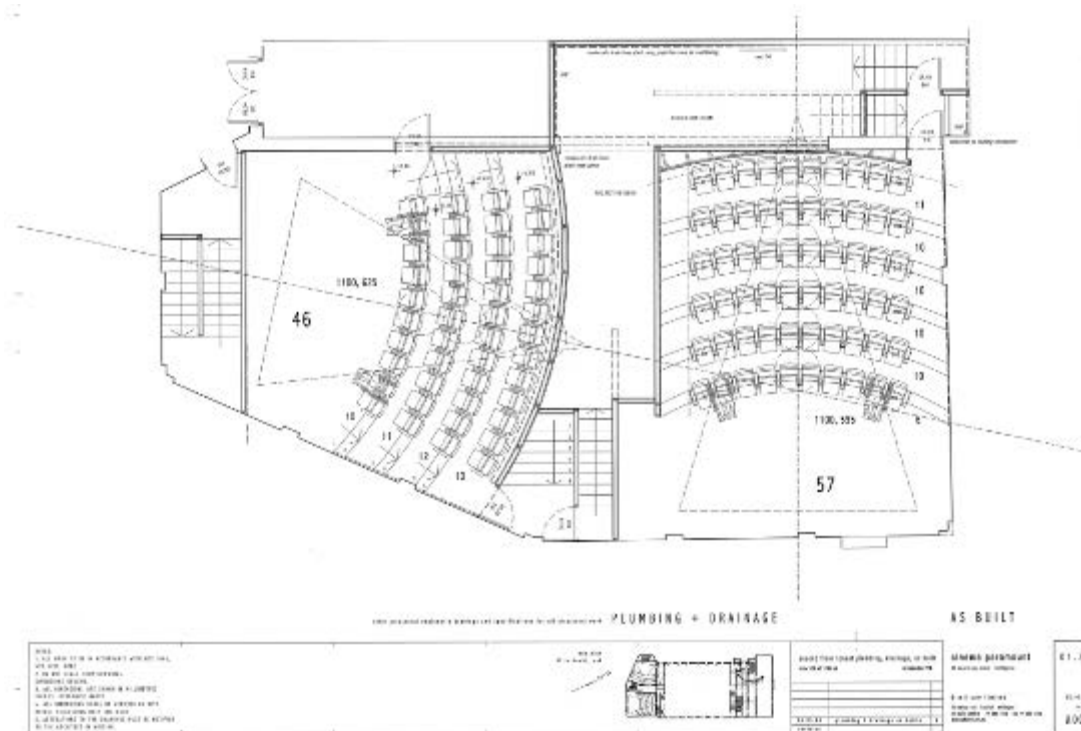
<sup>8</sup> 'Heritage Building – 25 Courtenay Place', 1041-06-COU25 Vol1, Wellington City Council Records.

<sup>9</sup> 'Never say die for the Paramount', *The Wellingtonian*, 16 September 2004.

Festival. The modest architectural appearance of the theatre belies the important social and historical role it has played in Wellington for over 90 years.<sup>10</sup>

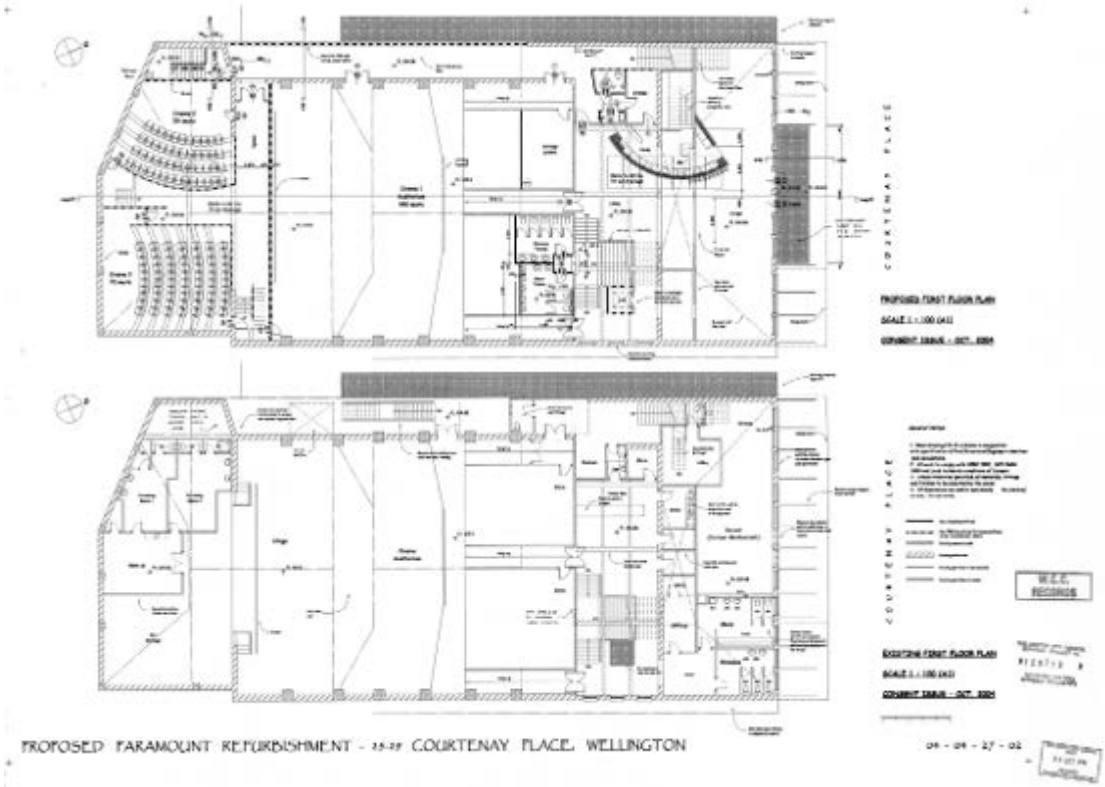


A panorama of the Courtenay Place streetscape including the Paramount, 1923, before the new parapet was added four years later.  
(ID: PA6-017, Robert Percy Moore Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library)

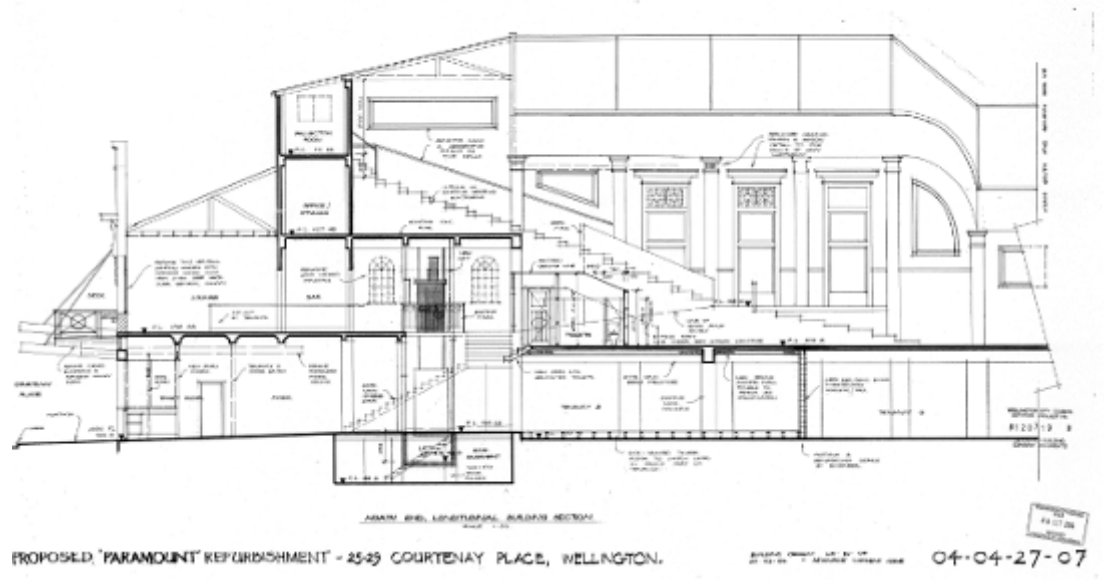


The two smaller theatres built at the rear of the building, 2004. (00078:1521:120719)

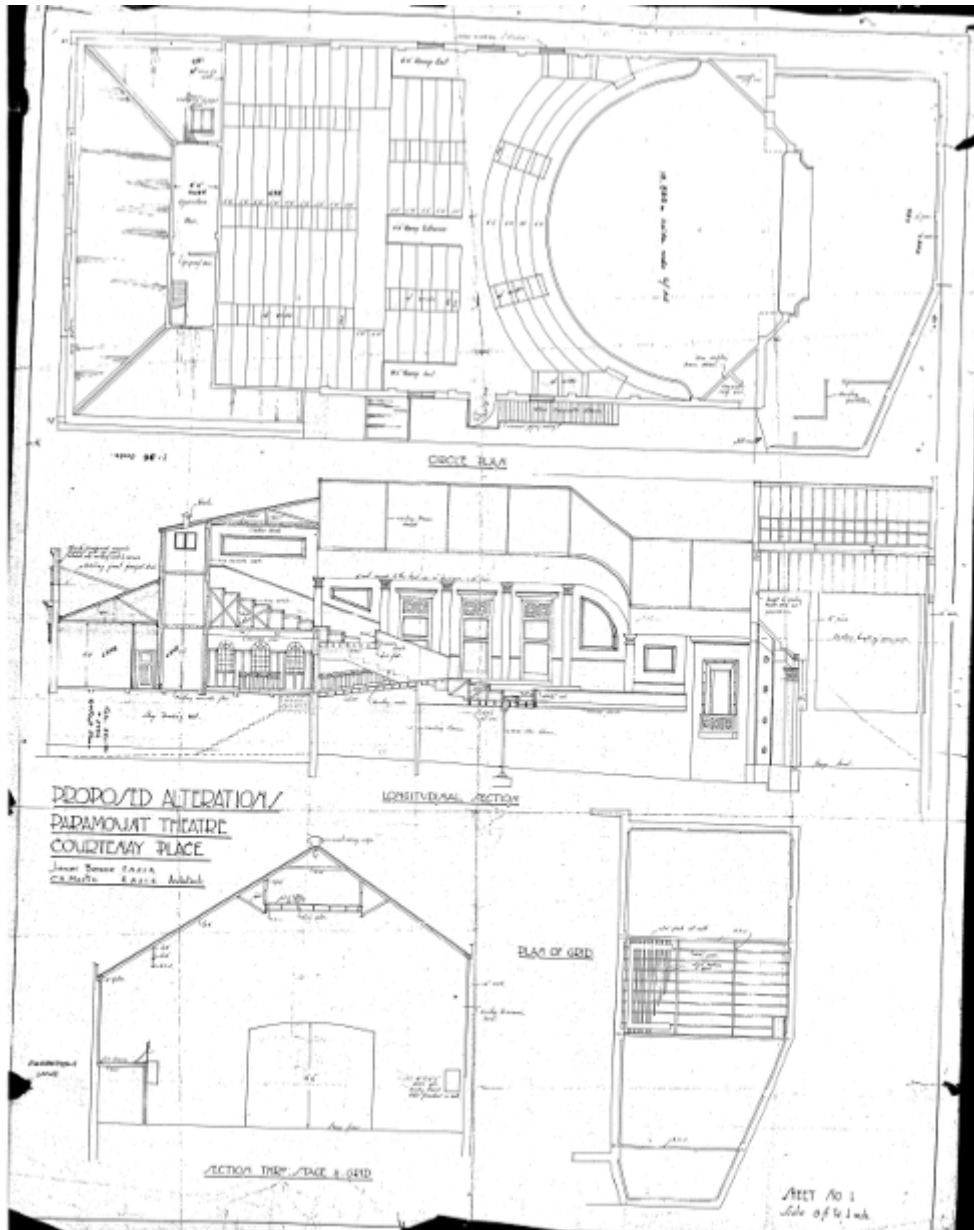
<sup>10</sup> Wellington City Council, "Paramount Theatre"



Refurbishment of ground floor and level 1, lift, two new cinemas and the shop front altered, 2004. (00078:1521:120719)



Refurbishment of ground floor and level 1, lift and shop front altered, 2004. (00078:1521:120719)



Refurbishment of ground floor and level 1, lift, two new cinemas and the shop front altered, 2004. (00078:1521:120719)

## 1.2 Timeline of modifications

- 1916-17 Theatre built. Applicant: W.R. Johns, Owner: JJ Williamson. (00053:189:10374)
- 1927 Alterations designed by James Bennie - the street façade had a parapet added with the name 'PARAMOVNT' in relief. (00056:28:B2740)
- 1929 Conveniences added. (00056:85:B8059)
- 1933 New sign erected a new sign. (00056:134:B12194)
- 1937 New sign erected. (00056:187:B16387)  
New neon sign erected. (00056:191:B16747)

- 1939 Existing entrance doors moved closer to the street, extra door added to make a total of five doors. (00056:219:B18711)
- 1940 Ladies conveniences, cloak room and new lounge added. (00056:245:B20384)  
A stall and ticket booth built on the ground floor.<sup>11</sup>
- 1943 Structural alterations undertaken, including strengthening of internal piers. Structural alterations made to the east and west walls of the main theatre. (00056:288:B23019)
- 1954 Alterations. (00056:482:B36252)
- 1960 Major alterations undertaken. The ground floor converted to offices, orchestra pit filled with concrete and interior 'changed beyond all recognition'.<sup>12</sup> Circle theatre seating altered, parapet altered, front entrance moved and window altered. Extension of theatre egress stairs, orchestra floor pit, altered stage area. (00058:164:C7646 and 00058:160:C7480) Changes were designed by Kofoed & Arnold Architects.<sup>13</sup>
- 1961 Building alterations. (00058:172:C8006)
- 1969 Building alterations – monorail. (00058:640:C29617)
- 1977 Roof replaced. (00058:1111:C48041)
- 1983 Men's toilets installed. (00058:0:C61489)
- 1990 Alterations. (00059:431:E21591)
- 1993 Business additions and alterations – restaurant. (00059:612:E27143)
- 1994 Restaurant entrance formed. (00060:104:3798)
- 1995 Commercial building alterations: alterations to exterior and verandah. (00061:66:11992)  
Original entry to the cinema reinstated, including the addition of three suspended verandahs, new doors and pavement decoration. Interior painted to reflect the old style. Architects were John Duncan and Tommy Honey of Smoked Hoki Design. Seating reduced to 710.<sup>14</sup>
- 2004 Theatre refurbished, including ground floor & level 1, lift, two new cinemas, shop front altered. (00078:1521:120719)
- 2005 Fit-out of ground floor for restaurant. (00078:1517:126490)  
Re-fit of restaurant and bar. (00078:1533:129957)  
Shop alterations. (00078:2130:127830)  
Illuminated sign under verandah. (00078:3440:130291)
- 2006 Restaurant additions and alterations. (00078:2224:145276)
- 2007 Restaurant additions and alterations. (00078:2346:157950)

---

<sup>11</sup> Ben Ginders, *Paramount Theatre: Conservation Plan*, Ben Ginders, (unpublished report, October 2000), 7-8

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

### 1.3 Occupation history

The Paramount Theatre was occupied by the Paramount Picture Theatre until the mid-1960s, when the occupancy changed to the Paramount International Cinema.<sup>15</sup> There were a number of small businesses who also occupied shops in the building. They included – but are not limited to – the following businesses:

Paramount Picture Theatre (Stones 1920 - 1944; Wises 1950-1 to 1961-2) Paramount International Cinema (Wises 1967-8 to 1990) W.R. Kemball, jr., manager (Stones 1930) F. Kemball, manager (Stones 1935) S.S. Bridgford, manager (Stones 1940); Paramount Millinery Co. (Stones 1920 - 1930); Henry McCarthy, stationary (Stones 1920 - 1925); Arthur Laws, saddler (later sports depot) (Stones 1920 - 1930); Hope Bros., mens & boys outfitters (Stones 1930 - 1945; Wises 1950-1 to 1971-2). John White Menswear Ltd. (Wises 1975). Paramount Milk Bar (Stones 1940 - 1945). Bennet Ltd., china dealers (Wises 1955 - 1990).<sup>16</sup>

### 1.4 Architect

James Bennie

Bennie was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, immigrated to New Zealand in 1880 and settled in Brunnertown near Greymouth. In the early 1890s he attended the Working Men's College in Melbourne, Australia, where he studied under artist and architect Thomas Searell. On completion of his studies he returned to Greymouth and set up in practice as an architect. In 1903 Bennie moved to Wellington and went into practice with E C Farr before establishing his own practice in 1905.

Some of Bennie's designs include the Albermarle Hotel, Wellington (1905), the Carnegie Library at Levin (1910), the Karori Methodist Church (1912), and the Oriental Bay Tea Kiosk (1912, demolished 1978). He designed a number of theatres including Kings (1910), Queens (1916), the Crown (1916) and Paramount (1917), all in Wellington and was also responsible for the design of many houses including the Wedge, Glenberrie Terrace (1906) and Bennie house, Salamanca road (1907) both in Wellington. He also had an interest in prefabricated house design. Bennie was an inaugural member of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, founded in 1905, and was later elected a Fellow. He retired in 1935 and his son Malcolm took over the Wellington practice.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Stones Street Directories* 1920, 1944, 1967/8, 1990

<sup>16</sup> Wellington City Council, *Courtenay Place Heritage Area spreadsheet*. (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006).

<sup>17</sup> Historic Places Trust, "Bennie, James", Accessed: August 2012, <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?ID=23>



## **2.0 Physical description**

### **2.1 Architecture**

The Paramount Theatre is a late Edwardian building designed by noted architect James Bennie.

The two-storey principal façade is surmounted with a tall parapet that masks the large block of the auditorium beyond. The façade is elegantly composed and detailed in a lightly ornamented but formal style reminiscent of the Glasgow Arts and Crafts school. Although today not much remains of the original building beyond the façade, it is a very important building in the streetscape. New retail spaces have been carefully designed to sit within the building and the broader streetscape and reflect the original pattern of shop-fronts.<sup>18</sup>

The exterior ground floor has lost its large, arched, main entrance, but from verandah level above the facade is largely in authentic condition. It has a regular band of windows, elongated brackets supporting a cornice, from which rods extend to support the verandah. (The slightly pitched main verandah was supported by a row of rods but today there are just two. The verandah over the entrance retains its rods). Above, is the stepped Art Deco-style parapet with panels inset with the sun motif, and moulded by string courses and shallow cornices. The name 'PARAMOVNT' is set in relief in the middle of the parapet.

The interior has undergone several major renovations and refurbishments. It originally comprised a two level auditorium with 1511 seats, plus retail tenancies on the ground floor and office space at the front of the first floor. Today the original seating for some 1200 people on two levels is now reduced to 450 in what was the circle.

### **2.2 Materials**

Steel-framed, with reinforced concrete foundations and brick masonry interior and exterior walls. The roof is timber-framed and clad with corrugated iron.

### **2.3 Setting**

The Paramount Theatre sits in the middle of the block of largely two-storied buildings between Cambridge Terrace and Tory Street. The building stock in this block is diverse in nature and age but, despite some particularly intrusive modern buildings, it retains a high streetscape quality which contributes significantly to the heritage value and character of Courtenay Place.

The building is part of a row of five, two storey heritage buildings that sit between the conspicuously large Courtenay Chambers to the east and a group of taller old buildings at the western end of the block. With the generous width of Courtenay Place it is easy to see the stretch of (predominantly low-rise) buildings on both sides of the street and the vistas east and west. At the eastern end, the substantial form of the Embassy Theatre looms over the intersection with Cambridge and Kent Terraces, while behind that are the houses and trees of Mt Victoria.

---

<sup>18</sup> Adapted from: Kelly, Michael and Russell Murray, *Courtenay Place Heritage Area Report*. (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006).

### 3.0 Sources

CT WN909/87, Land Information New Zealand

Ginders, Ben. *Paramount: Conservation Plan*, October 2000, unpublished.

Historic Places Trust, "Bennie, James", Professional Biographies, Accessed: August 2012,

<http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?ID=23>

Lascelles, David. *Eighty Turbulent Years: The Paramount Theatre Wellington 1917-1997*, Millwood Press, 1997.

"Paramount: Cinema Since 1917", Accessed: August 2012,

<http://www.paramount.co.nz/>

Stones Street Directories

"This Month In History 2012", Historic Places Trust, Accessed: August 2012,

<http://www.historic.org.nz/en/TheRegister/MonthHistory/MonthHistory2010.aspx>

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

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

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

#### Newspapers

'Never say die for the Paramount', *The Wellingtonian*, 16 September 2004.

'Paramount Continuous Picture Theatre', *Evening Post*, Volume XCVIII, Issue 76, 1 April 1919.

#### Wellington City Archives

"25 Courtenay Place- theatre and shops [Paramount Theatre]", 1916, 00053:189:10374, Wellington City Archives.

"Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - alterations", 1927, 00056:28:B2740, Wellington City Archives.

"23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] – conveniences", 1929, 00056:85:B8059, Wellington City Archives.

"27-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - erect sign", 1933, 00056:134:B12194, Wellington City Archives.

"25 Courtenay Place - erect sign", 1937, 00056:187:B16387, Wellington City Archives.

“25 Courtenay Place - erect neon sign”, 1937, 00056:191:B16747, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - entrance doors”, 1939, 00056:219:B18711, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] – wall”, 1940, 00056:244:B20327, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - ladies conveniences and cloak room”, 1940, 00056:245:B20384, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - structural alterations to the Paramount Theatre”, 1943, 00056:288:B23019, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] – alterations”, 1954, 00056:482:B36252, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - theatre alterations”, 1960, 00058:160:C7480, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - building alterations”, 1960, 00058:164:C7646, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - building alterations”, 1961, 00058:172:C8006, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - building alterations – monorail”, 1969, 00058:640:C29617, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] – roof”, 1977, 00058:1111:C48041, Wellington City Archives.

“23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - men's toilets”, 1983, 00058:0:C61489, Wellington City Archives.

“27 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - Paramount Theatre, cinema alterations”, 1990, 00059:431:E21591, Wellington City Archives.

“27 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - business additions and alterations – restaurant”, 1993, 00059:612:E27143, Wellington City Archives.

“27 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - Paramount Theatre, restaurant entrance”, 1994, 00060:104:3798, Wellington City Archives.

“27 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - commercial building alterations”, 1995, 00061:66:11992, Wellington City Archives.

“25 Courtenay Place, Paramount Theatre – refurbishment”, 2004, 00078:1521:120719, Wellington City Archives.

“25 Courtenay Place - tenancy fit-out for restaurant and ground floor”, 2005, 00078:1517:126490, Wellington City Archives.

“25 Courtenay Place - refit of restaurant and bar”, 2005, 00078:1533:129957, Wellington City Archives.

“25 Courtenay Place - shop alterations”, 2005, 00078:2130:127830, Wellington City Archives.

“25-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place] - illuminated sign under verandah for tenancy 3”, 2005, 00078:3440:130291, Wellington City Archives.

“25 Courtenay Place - restaurant additions and alterations, tenancy 5”, 2006, 00078:2224:145276, Wellington City Archives.

“25 Courtenay Place - restaurant additions and alterations”, 2007, 00078:2346:157950, Wellington City Archives.

### **Wellington City Council Records**

“Heritage Building”. 1997. 1041-06-COU25 Vol1, Wellington City Council Records.

## 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 is a late Edwardian theatre designed by noted architect James Bennie, and is the only survivor of a number of theatres that Bennie designed.

**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?*

The building and its largely authentic 1927 façade contribute positively to the streetscape in Courtenay Place.

**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?*

This building is part of the Courtenay Place Heritage Area and sits amidst a row of five, two storey heritage buildings of a similar scale, age and materials

#### **Historic Value:**

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

The architect was James Bennie, a significant Wellington architect in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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

This theatre was is part of the development of the entertainment industry in Wellington. In particular, it played an important role in the popularity of the cinema and the shift from silent movies to the 'talkies' in 1929. This theatre was the first in Australasia to show a 'talking' movie.

#### **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. Although some of the sites have been altered by rebuilding or landscaping or subdivisional change, there is archaeological value in the immediate surrounds.

**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?*

The Paramount is a movie venue well-known to many generations of film-goers in Wellington. Its association with the annual International Film Festival gives it additional prominence to ardent filmgoers.

**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?*

This building is part of a group of commercial buildings on Courtenay Place which all date from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and contribute to the sense of place and continuity of the Courtenay Place Heritage Area.

**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 Paramount is the oldest purpose-built picture theatre in Wellington city and is the only survivor of a number of theatres that James Bennie designed.

**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?*

The 1927 façade is in largely authentic condition but the interior of the theatre has been much altered.

**Local/Regional/National/International**

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

This building is of national significance as it was the venue for the first 'talkie' shown in Australasia in March 1929.

## 5.0 Appendix

### Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory	Y	
WCC Records – building file	Y	
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)	Y	
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
Plan change?		
Heritage Area Report		
Heritage Area Spreadsheet	Y	
Heritage items folder (electronic)		
HPT website	Y	
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)	Y	Nothing

### Background research

#### WCC Permits

00053:1 89:1037 4	25 Courtenay Place, theatre and shops [Paramount Theatre]	Applicant: W R Johns. Owner: J J Williamson. Architect: James Bennie. Note: Envelope contains application form and specifications only, it does not contain plans.	Building Permit/Consent	21 Sep 1916
00056:2 8:B2740	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], alterations	Legal description: Town section 277. Owner: J J Williamson. Builder: J T Julian and Son LTD .	Building Permit/Consent	19 Feb 1927
00056:8 5:B8059	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], conveniences	Legal description: Town Section 277. Owner: J J Williamson. Builder: Higgins and Arcus. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent	17 Sep 1929
00056:1 34:B121 94	27-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay	Owner: B C O'Connor. Builder: Claude Neon Lights Ltd.	Building Permit/Consent	1933

	Place], erect sign			
00056:1 87:B163 87	25 Courtenay Place, erect sign	Owner: Simpson. Builder: Claude Neon Lights Ltd.	Building Permit/Consent	06 Apr 1937
00056:1 91:B167 47	25 Courtenay Place, erect neon sign	Owner: Friendly Society Dispensary. Builder: Ray Neon	Building Permit/Consent	06 Jul 1937
00056:2 19:B187 11	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], entrance doors	Legal description: Lot 277 . Owner: Paramount Theatre Co. Builder: Parkin Bros. Application value: £80.	Building Permit/Consent	12 Jan 1939
00056:2 44:B203 27	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], wall	Legal description: Lot 277 . Owner: Paramount Theatre Co. Builder: L Turksma. Application value: £37. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent	11 Mar 1940
00056:2 45:B203 84	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], ladies conveniences and cloak room	Legal description: Town Acre 277. Owner: J J Williamson. Builder: L Turksma. Application value: £165. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent	01 Apr 1940
00056:2 88:B230 19	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], structural alterations to the Paramount Theatre	Legal description: Town Acre 277. Owner: J J Williamson. Builder: James Bennie. Application value: £600.	Building Permit/Consent	08 Nov 1943
00056:4 82:B362 52	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], alterations	Legal description: Town acre 277. Owner: Wellington City Council (WCC). Builder: J Jenkins. Application value: £630. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent	08 Jun 1954
00058:1 60:C748 0	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], theatre alterations	Legal description: Town Acre 277. Owner: Paramount Syndicate. Builder: A Lemmon Limited. Application value: £15716. Note: Paramount Theatre	Building Permit/Consent	1960
00058:1	23-29	Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444, DP	Building	1960



64:C764 6	Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], building alterations	3594, Town Acre 277. Owner: Paramount Theatre Co Builder: A Lemmon Limited. Application value: £2,350. Floor area: 8000 square feet. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Permit/Consent	
00058:1 72:C800 6	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], building alterations	Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444, DP 3594, Town Acre 277. Owner: T A Board. Builder: Kauri Building Co. Application value: £16601. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent	1961
00058:6 40:C296 17	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], building alterations - monorail	Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444, DP 3594, Town Acre 277. Owner: TAB. Builder: Alliance Engineering. Application value: \$140. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent	1969
00058:1 111:C48 041	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], roof	Legal description: Town Acre 277. Owner: Paramount Syndicate. Builder: E R Glass Construction Limited. Application value: \$800. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent	30 Aug 1977
00058:0: C61489	23-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], men's toilets	Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444, DP 3594, Town Acre 277. Owner: Paramount Theatre Co. Builder: E R Glass Construction Limited. Application value: \$14642. Note: Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent Microfiche	16 Mar 1983
00059:4 31:E215 91	27 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], Paramount Theatre, cinema alterations	Owner: Paramount Theatre Company Ltd. Builder: Venture Construction. Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444, Lot 1 DP 3595. Application value: \$320,000.	Building Permit/Consent	1990
00059:6 12:E271 43	27 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], business additions and alterations - restaurant		Building Permit/Consent	1993
00060:1 04:3798	27 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], Paramount		Building Permit/Consent	10 Feb 1994

	Theatre, restaurant entrance.			
00061:6 6:11992	27 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], commercial building alterations		Building Permit/Consent	20 Sep 1995
00078:1 521:120 719	25 Courtenay Place, Paramount Theatre, refurbishment	Owner: Metro Investments Limited. Applicant: RAB Designer. Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444, Lot 1 DP 3595. Application value: \$385,000.	Building Permit/Consent	2004
00078:1 517:126 490	25 Courtenay Place, tenancy fit-out for restaurant, ground floor	Owner: Metro Investments Ltd. Applicant: Shish Mahal Ltd. Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444. Application value: \$14,000.	Building Permit/Consent	2005
00078:1 533:129 957	25 Courtenay Place, refit of restaurant and bar	Owner: Metro Investments limited. Applicant: Metro Investments limited. Legal Description: Lot 1 DP 3444 and Lot 1 DP 3595. Application Value: \$280,000. Note: Paramount Theatre building, rear tenancy ground floor.	Building Permit/Consent	2005
00078:2 130:127 830	25 Courtenay Place, shop alterations	Owner: Metro Investments Ltd. Applicant: Colebrook Developments Ltd. Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444. Application value: \$21,500.	Building Permit/Consent	2005
00078:3 440:130 291	25-29 Courtenay Place [25 Courtenay Place], illuminated sign under verandah for tenancy 3	Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444, Lot 1 DP 3595. Owner: Metro Investments Ltd. Applicant and designer: Color Glo Plastics Co Ltd. Project value: \$1,500. Note: Known as Paramount Theatre.	Building Permit/Consent	2005
00078:2 224:145 276	25 Courtenay Place, restaurant additions and alterations, tenancy 5	Owner: Metro Investments Ltd. Applicant: M M Architects. Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444. Application value: \$10,000.	Building Permit/Consent	2006
00078:2 346:157 950	25 Courtenay Place, restaurant additions and alterations	Owner: Metro Investments Ltd. Applicant: The House Ltd. Legal description: Lot 1 DP 3444. Application value: \$40,000.	Building Permit/Consent	2007

Considerable interest is being shown in the opening of the new Paramount Theatre, a luxuriously-fitted picture palace situated at Courtenay-place, at which the initial screenings commence to-morrow night. The Paramount is a spacious, cosy, building, in which quaint architecture and new designs in appointments have combined to ensure the comfort and congenial surroundings that movie "fans" and general entertainment patrons appreciate. For the opening session, the first of the Artcraft productions, "Less Than the Dust," has been secured. In this big feature play the idol of the screen, Mary Pickford, is seen at her best, in the role of a deserted orphan, reared among sordid native surroundings in India. There is an uprising, very realistically carried out, and thence on there is a tender love story interwoven in the exciting plot. Miss Pickford's latest effort is described as her triumph in dramatic acting. There are other well-selected pictures, an ideal programme for first-nighters in a new and handsome entertainment house. Excellent lighting, seating, and ventilation arrangements have been installed in the building, which ranks among the handsomest of Wellington's many theatres.

*Evening Post*, Volume XCIV, Issue 29, 3 August 1917, Page 2



The Paramount Milk Bar, Courtenay Place, 1969. (O.038897, John Daley, Te Papa Museum)  
<http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/ObjectDetails.aspx?oid=1253676>