

Band Rotunda

245 Oriental Parade, Oriental Bay



September 2012, Gregory Young Photography



Image: *Charles Collins, 2015*

Summary of heritage significance

- The Band Rotunda is a self-assertive piece of nautical, Moderne architecture that is unique in Wellington for its proximity to the waters of the harbour.
- The Band Rotunda's historic value is derived from its construction by the Wellington City Council as a public facility for the use and enjoyment of visitors and residents of Oriental Bay.
- The Band Rotunda is an integral part of the Oriental Parade seawall and a prominent landmark, occupying a dramatic site in the centre of the sweep of Oriental Bay and located on a magnificent promenade.
- It has strong social value for its use as a public place well sited for views and sun. It retains a socially useful mix of uses to the present day, forming a visual focus in the ever popular Oriental Bay, the closest bathing beach to the central city.

District Plan:	Map 12, reference 235
Legal Description:	LOT 1 DP 11079
Heritage Area:	no
HPT Registered:	Category II, reference 2894
Archaeological Site:	Risk Unknown
Other Names:	Fisherman's Table
Key physical dates:	1936, 1981
Architect / Builder:	Wellington City Council Engineer's Department (1936), Hunt, Comeskey and Scott (1981)
Former uses:	Recreation
Current uses:	Restaurant and community rooms
Earthquake Prone Status:	SR 201144 (Earthquake Prone)

Extent: Cityview 2012



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

In common with most cities and towns in New Zealand, Wellington had a band rotunda for free public musical performances. About 1919 a timber rotunda was erected on a platform of land reclaimed from Oriental Parade². This rotunda is almost certainly that which previously sat in the square in front of the Old Town Hall.

In 1936, a new reinforced concrete rotunda was designed by the WCC Engineer's Department. No specific individual has been identified as the designer. The contractor was Walter Hodges, a builder of Roseneath and the anticipated cost was £6756. The new rotunda included changing rooms with separate spaces for men, women, boys, and girls.

The rotunda was a facility which added to the general improvement to Oriental Bay. It was regularly used for musical performances in its first few decades but use later declined. In the 1970s new uses for the rotunda were considered and it was decided to convert it into a restaurant. The open space designation was lifted in 1981 and an enclosed space was created by building a new roof over the existing rotunda. A public space was created on the new roof. The architects were Hunt, Comeskey and Scott. The area previously occupied by the changing rooms was opened out and became a meeting room for local residents and an art gallery. It is not certain when this work was conducted.

The rotunda is still used as a restaurant and its roof remains a popular vantage point for visitors to Oriental Bay.



This image shows the old wooden band rotunda that was replaced in 1936, photograph by Sydney Charles Smith, 1932, ATL, ref 1/2-045342-G

¹ Text paraphrased from Wellington City Council, "Oriental Parade, Band Rotunda" Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings. (Wellington City Council, 2001), ORIE 3.

² The sea wall and platform the band rotunda sits on was built in 1917.



Oriental Parade, early 1950s, photograph by William Hall Raine, ATL, ref: 1/2-100951-G

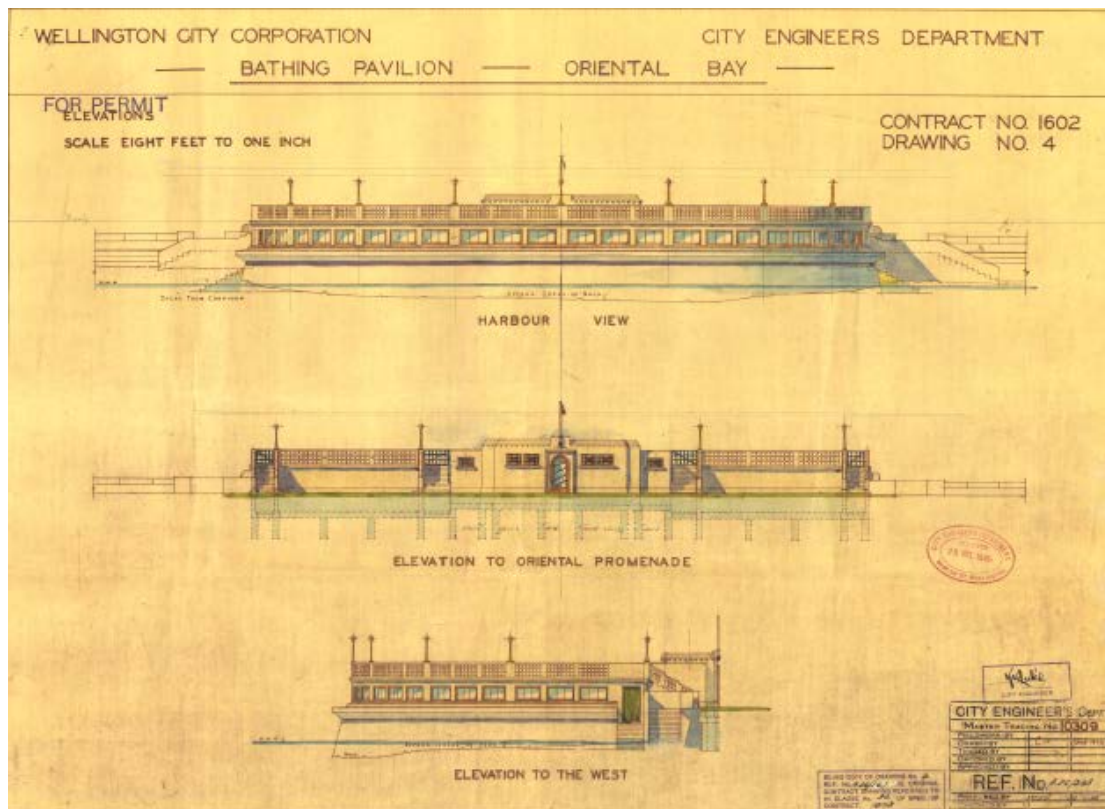


Band Rotunda, 2011, by tony_the_bald_eagle's photos, www.flickr.com

1.2 Timeline of modifications

- 1936 Consent granted for the bathing pavilion
- 1984 Permit granted to convert the pavilion into a restaurant; included adding another storey to the building
- 1996 Alterations to the balcony
- 2003 Construction of self-contained public toilets
- 2006 Fire egress reinstated on western side of the building. Structure attached to the existing ramp from footpath to the beach

The full list of modifications and the corresponding Wellington City Archives' reference numbers are listed under the section "Background Research".



2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture³

The original building was designed as a bathing pavilion with a viewing platform above which housed a relocated band rotunda. The lines of the building were low-slung and Moderne, with a simple stepped parapet over the central entrance and a balcony of concrete set in a grill pattern. A plain cornice marked the roof line. Post-and-ball lights added emphasis to the top, and small grilled windows on the street elevation lit the toilets on either side of the entrance. The windows to the changing-rooms on the seaward elevation were plain sliding casements.

The plan is semi-circular, with a central ground-floor corridor parallel with Oriental Parade. The addition of another floor, which presently houses a restaurant, preserves the building's essential lines, although the cantilevered balcony on the seaward elevation has changed the original low-key emphasis considerably.

Construction is reinforced concrete foundations, walls, and roof, with some precast concrete beams. Ornamental iron work in grills and gates survives (2012).

2.2 Materials

- Reinforced concrete and precast concrete beams
- Metal window joinery
- Iron work in grills and gate

2.3 Setting

The Band Rotunda is a prominent landmark, occupying a dramatic site in the centre of the sweep of Oriental Bay and located on a magnificent promenade. It is seen from around the bay and from across the harbour, a self-assertive piece of nautical architecture that is unique in Wellington for its closeness to the waters of the harbour.

3.0 Sources

“The Band Rotunda” *New Zealand Home & Building* New Zealand Institute of Architects, October–November 1985.

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

³ Wellington City Council, “Oriental Parade Band Rotunda”

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 Band Rotunda is a self-assertive piece of nautical, Moderne architecture that is unique in Wellington for its proximity to the waters of the harbour.

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 Band Rotunda is an integral part of the Oriental Parade seawall and a prominent landmark, occupying a dramatic site in the centre of the sweep of Oriental Bay and located on a magnificent promenade.

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 is one of two band rotundas listed on the District Plan. The popularity of public musical performances at band rotundas declined in the mid twentieth century and few remain.

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?*

The Band Rotunda's historic value is derived from its construction by the Wellington City Council as a public facility for the use and enjoyment of visitors and residents of Oriental Bay.

Scientific Value:

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

Risk unknown

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?*

It has strong social value for its use as a public place well sited for views and sun. It retains a socially useful mix of uses to the present day, forming a visual focus in the ever popular Oriental Bay, the closest bathing beach to the central city.

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?

Although the current band rotunda is much altered, this site has been occupied by a band rotunda for over 90 years and this continuity of use contributes to the identity, sense of place and continuity of the Oriental Parade streetscape, and the Wellington city sea-front.

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

It retains its traditional use as a popular platform for concerts and public events with the additional bonus of a restaurant and bar.

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?*

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?*

Local/Regional/National/International

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

5.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

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

Background research

00056:18 1:B15888	245 Oriental Parade, bathing pavilion	Owner: Wellington City Council (WCC). Builder: Walter Hodges Notes: Oriental Parade Band Rotunda.	Building Permit/Consent	09 Nov 1936
00058:0: C66895	245 Oriental Parade, restaurant	Owner: PW Andrews. Builder: DM Andrews. Application value: \$41,900.	Building Permit/Consent Microfiche	13 Dec 1984
00078:22 :23186	245 Oriental Parade, alterations to balcony	Owner: David and Murray Goodman. Applicant: Hunt Davies Architects. Legal description: Lot 1 DP 11079. Application value: \$180,000. Note: Quayside Restaurant.	Building Permit/Consent	1996
00078:10 92:97826	245 Oriental Parade, construction of self-contained public toilets, stage 2	Owner: Wellington City Council. Applicant: Wellington City Council. Legal description:	Building Permit/Consent	2003
00078:19	245 Oriental Parade,	Note: commercial - band	Building	2006

39:15390 4	exemption consent	rotunda - reinstate fire egress on western side of building. structure to be attached to existing ramp from footpath to beach.	Permit/Consent	
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SR Code	SR Type	SRI Description	SRI Status	Current Updated
27959	Bldg WOF	Fishermans Table & Band Rotunda under one CS	Waiting On WoF	30/11/2011

SR Code	SR Type	SRI Description	SRI Status	Current Updated
153904	aBLDG CONSENT	2.1 Exemption Consent - Commercial - Band Rotunda - Reinstate fire egress on western side of building. Structure to be attached to existing ramp from footpath to beach.	Exemption - Closed	8/11/2006

SR Code	SR Type	SRI Description	SRI Status	Current Updated
173960	Building Info	Arts Centre & Restaurant Fisherman's TableArts Centre is used now a community room for Oriental Bay Residents Association.	On-going	10/01/2008

SR Code	SR Type	SRI Description	SRI Status	Current Updated
201144	Bdg StrengthInv	BECA	Info to Engineer [P]	20/02/2012