

Otari

5 Makererua Street, Ngaio



Images: Charles Collins, 2015

Summary of heritage significance

- Otari has significant architectural value as an early and impressive example of Chapman Taylor's design work. The house is one of his best Arts and Crafts houses, Chapman Taylor's command of building block forms, chimneys, and openings was masterly, and he moulded and sculpted his buildings in true Arts and Crafts form. There is an enthusiasm, renewed excitement, and boldness in this buildings design and a variety of treatments have been used to interesting effect.
- This house is primarily associated with James Walter Chapman Taylor, an important Wellington architect, and the city's most prominent proponent of the Arts and Crafts Movement. It is also associated with prominent owners, firstly James H. Jerram, Deputy Manager of the State Fire Insurance Office, for whom the house was first built. It is also associated with Richard and Edith Campion who were well known members of the New Zealand theatre community, and the parents of award winning filmmaker Jane Campion.

District Plan:	Map 21, reference 389
Legal Description:	Lot 2 DP 28528
Heritage Area:	-
HPT Listed:	-
Archaeological Site:	-
Other Names:	Otari
Key physical dates:	Constructed: 1910
Architect / Builder:	Architect: James Walter Chapman Taylor
Former uses:	Domestic Dwelling
Current uses:	Domestic Dwelling
Earthquake Prone Status:	Outside Earthquake Prone Policy

Extent: Cityview GIS 2014



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

This stark white Arts and Crafts styled house, which is now referred to as Otari but once known locally as 'Jerram's Jail', was constructed in 1910. It was designed by prominent architect James Walter Chapman Taylor for wealthy Wellingtonian James H. Jerram. In 1908 Jerram had been appointed to the role of Deputy Manager of the State Fire Insurance Office.

This house was a significant commission for Chapman Taylor – the house is over 2000 square feet, and gave him significant opportunities to explore new design ideas and construction methods. He had recently returned from England where he had spent six months studying the English Arts and Crafts tradition, met leading Arts and Crafts architects, and inspected the buildings that they designed, as well as traditional English cottages. The influence of this trip is evident in this design, and in particular the work of architect Charles Voysey can be seen.

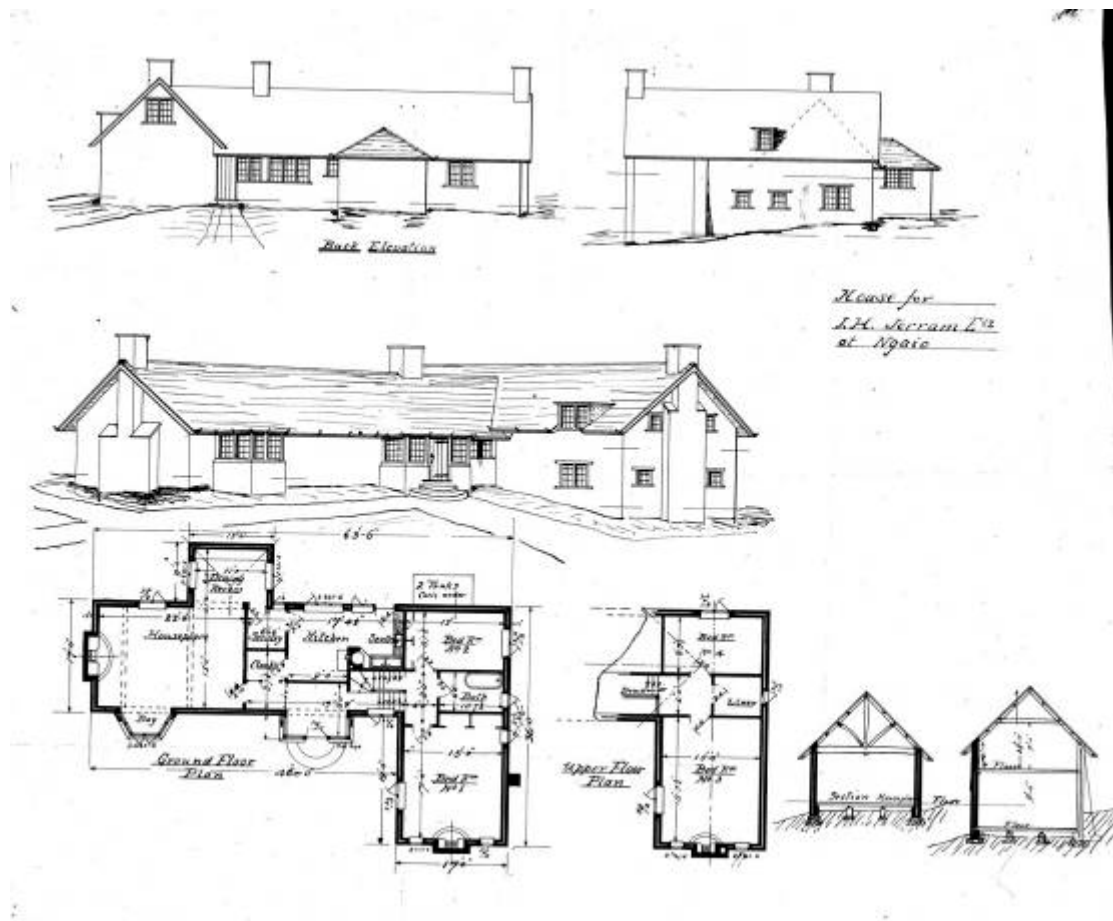
This house features an L shaped plan, half bay windows in the sitting room, windows set high under the roof line, wide entrance porch, round 'port hole' windows, an inglenook surrounding the fireplace, and mullioned windows.

The house is one of the first Chapman Taylor houses to be constructed in cavity brick and was constructed around the same time as the house on Burnell Avenue for Harry tombs. The two houses share a number of similarities and Chapman Taylor appears to have been using the new materials to full advantage. There is an enthusiasm, renewed excitement, and boldness in these buildings design and a variety of treatments have been used to interesting effect.

In 1944 James H. Jerram retired and the house was purchased by Richard and Edith Campion, well known members of the New Zealand theatre community, and parents of award winning filmmaker Jane Campion.

¹ History adapted from Judy Siers, 'James Walter Chapman-Taylor in Onslow 1909-1954', in *The Onslow Historian*, Volume 24, Numbers 1 and 2, 1994, 11-12.

1.2 Timeline of modifications



1910	Construction of dwelling (00050: 3: 78)
1928	Additions to dwelling (00056: 60: B5768)
1967	Dwelling additions (00058: 493: C21235)
1972	Dwelling additions and alterations (00058: 772: C34804)
1976	Construction of shed (00058: 1052: C54779)
1990	Dwelling additions and alterations (00059: 409: E20932)

1.3 Occupation history

Not Assessed

1.4 Architect²

James Walter Chapman Taylor (1878-1958)

Chapman Taylor was born in London in 1878. His father immigrated to New Zealand in 1879 and purchased land in Taranaki where the family then joined him in 1880. James Chapman Taylor did not follow his father into farming and instead was

² Judy Siers, 'Chapman Taylor, James Walter 1878-1951'. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 7 April 2007, accessed 6 August 2013, <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/3c11/chapman-taylor-james-walter>

apprenticed to a builder. His first project after completing the apprenticeship was a single storey timber house for his parents. He moved to Wellington around 1903 and was able to expand his career, which encompassed building, carpentry, furniture design, and architecture.

His domestic architecture exemplifies his abiding interest in the English Arts and Crafts movement, which emphasised a return to more traditional, hand crafted building methods, and which was intended to espouse the improving values an appropriately designed house could have upon individuals. He visited England in 1909 and again in 1914, and was able to meet leading Arts and Crafts architects and inspect the buildings that they designed, as well as traditional English cottages. Though he did experiment with different styles throughout his career, Arts and Crafts with a vernacular twist remained his preferred approach.

His is an honest architecture which remained popular despite changing fashions. Chapman-Taylor adhered to Arts and Crafts principles over the 50 years of his career and showed a keen awareness of local forms and materials. He designed the furniture and fittings for many of his houses, including details such as wrought iron door and window fittings. As an architect and a craftsman, Chapman-Taylor designed and then built his houses himself - approximately 80 of them dated between 1904 and 1953. While most of these houses are situated in Wellington and Heretaunga, there are others throughout the North Island and one in the South Island.

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

This house was one of the first constructed by Chapman Taylor in cavity brick, and he used this material to his advantage. The palette of materials includes cement rendered masonry, Marseilles tiles, exposed Jarrah beams, and stained timber leadlight windows. This house features an L shaped plan, half bay windows in the sitting room, windows set high under the roof line, wide entrance porch, round 'port hole' windows, an inglenook surrounding the fireplace, and mullioned windows.

Chapman Taylor's command of building block forms, chimneys, and openings was masterly, and he moulded and sculpted his buildings in true Arts and Crafts form. There is an enthusiasm, renewed excitement, and boldness in this buildings design and a variety of treatments have been used to interesting effect.

2.2 Materials

- Cavity brick
- Cement render
- Marseilles tiles
- Jarrah beans
- Stained timber leadlight windows

2.3 Setting

Otari is an attractive, distinguished, example of the Arts and Crafts style as designed by Walter Chapman. The house is set in a quiet and maturely wooded street and is not visible from the street.

3.0 Sources

Siers, Judy. 'James Walter Chapman-Taylor in Onslow 1909-1954', in *The Onslow Historian*, Volume 24, Numbers 1 and 2, 1994.

Siers, Judy. 'Chapman Taylor, James Walter 1878-1951'. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 7 April 2007, accessed 6 August 2013,
<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/3c11/chapman-taylor-james-walter>

Wellington City Archives

1910	Construction of dwelling (00050: 3: 78)
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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?*

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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?*

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?*

This house is primarily associated with James Walter Chapman Taylor, an important Wellington architect, and the city's most prominent proponent of the Arts and Crafts Movement. It is also associated with prominent owners, firstly James H. Jerram, Deputy Manager of the State Fire Insurance Office, for whom the house was first built. It is also associated with Richard and Edith Champion who were well known members of the New Zealand theatre community, and the parents of award winning filmmaker Jane Champion.

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

Scientific Value:

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

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?*

Otari was crafted by James Chapman Taylor by hand, and for this reason has technical value for what it can tell us about his techniques.

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?

The house has continuity value for its continued use as a residential dwelling for over 100 years. The house also contributes to the wider Thorndon suburb, as an area of architectural quality and interest.

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?

Otari is an excellent example of James Chapman Taylor's Arts and Crafts style.

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 retains functional use values and authenticity of design, materials, and workmanship.

Local/Regional/National/International

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

This house has local significance for its architectural merits, historic associations, technical values, and for its contribution to the identity and continuity of Makererua Street.

4.0 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*