

Clubhouse, Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club

103 Oriental Parade, Oriental Bay



Images: Charles Collins, 2015

Summary of heritage significance

- This building contributes to the Clyde Quay Boat Harbour Heritage Area.
- Clyde Quay Boat Harbour brings maritime architecture into close proximity with inner city housing, a juxtaposition that occurs in few other New Zealand cities.
- It is an existing example of a building constructed in the Wellington region specifically for military purposes during the Second World War.
- The prominence and longevity of the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club with yachting in New Zealand is well known and the clubhouse is a bastion of the sailing community in Wellington.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 10
Legal Description:	SEC 1 SO 24076
Heritage Area:	Clyde Quay Boat Harbour
HPT Registered:	Not registered
Archaeological Site:	Risk Unknown
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	1943, 1987
Architect / Builder:	United State Marine Corp
Former uses:	Hospital
Current uses:	Clubrooms
Earthquake Prone Status:	SR 200366 (building information given to the Engineer)

Extent: Cityview GSI 2012



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

Clyde Quay was originally part of the rocky beach between Courtenay Place and Oriental Bay and was connected to the city by a narrow road that went around the bays. Early occupants of Clyde Quay included boat builders who had premises there in the late 1800s.

The area was set aside for boat sheds in 1902 as part of the Te Aro reclamation. Two breakwaters were built in 1903 to provide some shelter and a brick sea wall was constructed along the roadside. The first 24 sheds were built in 1905, in two lots of 12, by the Wellington Harbour Board. The sheds were leased by members of the Port Nicholson Yacht Club and other clubs, and used for boat and gear storage and workshops. To meet increasing demand another 14 sheds were built in 1922 and these were of similar appearance to the original sheds.

The first private club buildings were built before World War I when the Te Aro Sailing Club built clubrooms and storage. The US Marines built a hospital on the site during the Second World War that was converted into the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club's clubrooms in the 1950s.

The Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, established in 1883, is Wellington's first yacht club. It was originally based in Thorndon and then moved to Evans Bay. When the Clyde Quay boat sheds were built, members moved over to the new complex. The club did not have the necessary resources to build a clubhouse straight away and had to wait until after World War I. The new clubhouse was opened in 1919 at the east end of Clyde Quay. The club received its warrant in 1921² and the title Royal was added to the club name. In 1942 American servicemen took over the harbour and converted the 1919 Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club clubhouse into a hospital, with the addition of a top storey. However, it was soon considered unsuitable and a new hospital was built.

The new hospital building was designed with the intention of ultimately becoming Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club's new clubhouse although it was not until 1955 that the club was able to obtain the lease on the building. The Club finally owned the building in 1986 and the following year substantially refurbished its clubhouse. It remains the home of Wellington's oldest and most prestigious sailing club.

¹ Text paraphrased from Wellington City Council, "Clyde Quay Boat Harbour Precinct," *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. (Wellington City Council, 2001), CLYDE QUAY.

² Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, *Our History*, Accessed October 2012
<http://www.rpnyc.org.nz/index.php/club/membership/history>

After having been closed for several years because its buildings and facilities were needed by the Forces, the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club will hold its official opening tomorrow, at 2.30 p.m. Included in the programme will be a demonstration by an Air Force pilot of the inflating of a rubber dinghy. He will do this in the water, wearing his full flying kit. A sailing dinghy race is included in the programme of yachting events. The clubhouse, which has been used as a hospital, was completely renovated for occupation by the Forces, and the club is indebted to the Forces, the Harbour Board, and the Government for added facilities.

Evening Post, Volume CXXXVIII, Issue 120, 17 November 1944, Page 3



Street view of the Clubhouse, 1958, ATL, ref EP/1958/2623-F

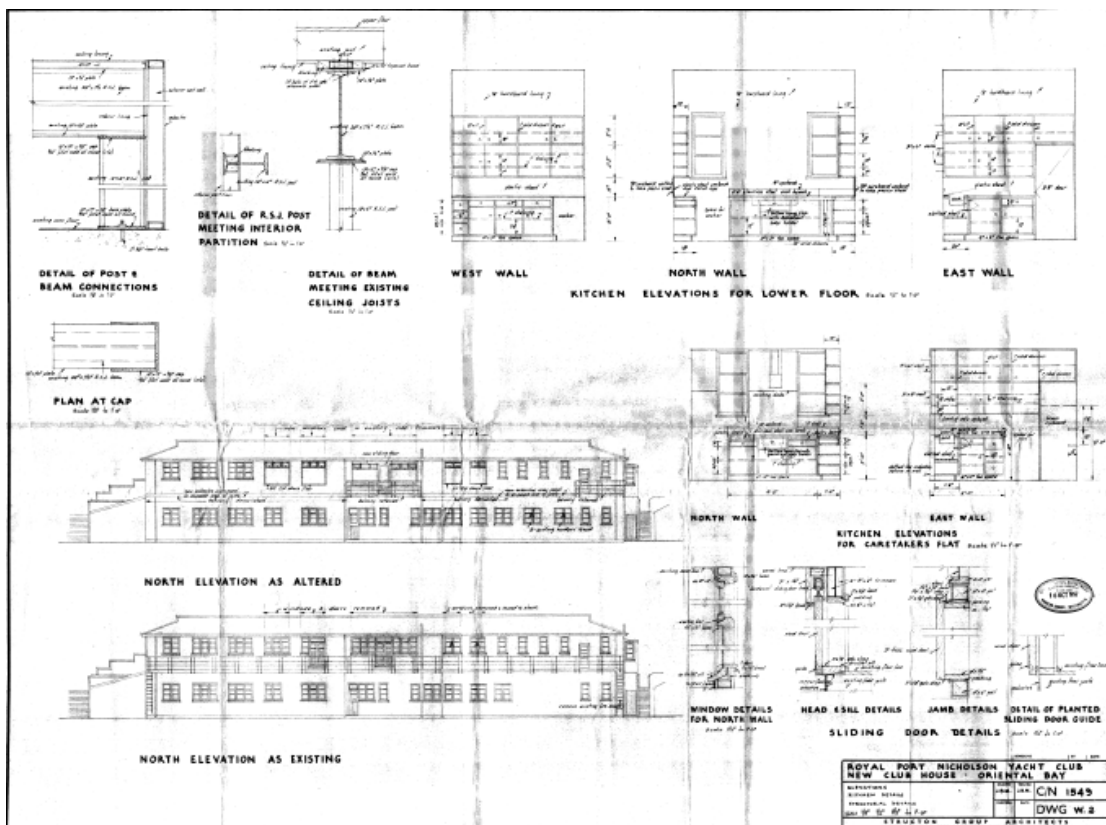
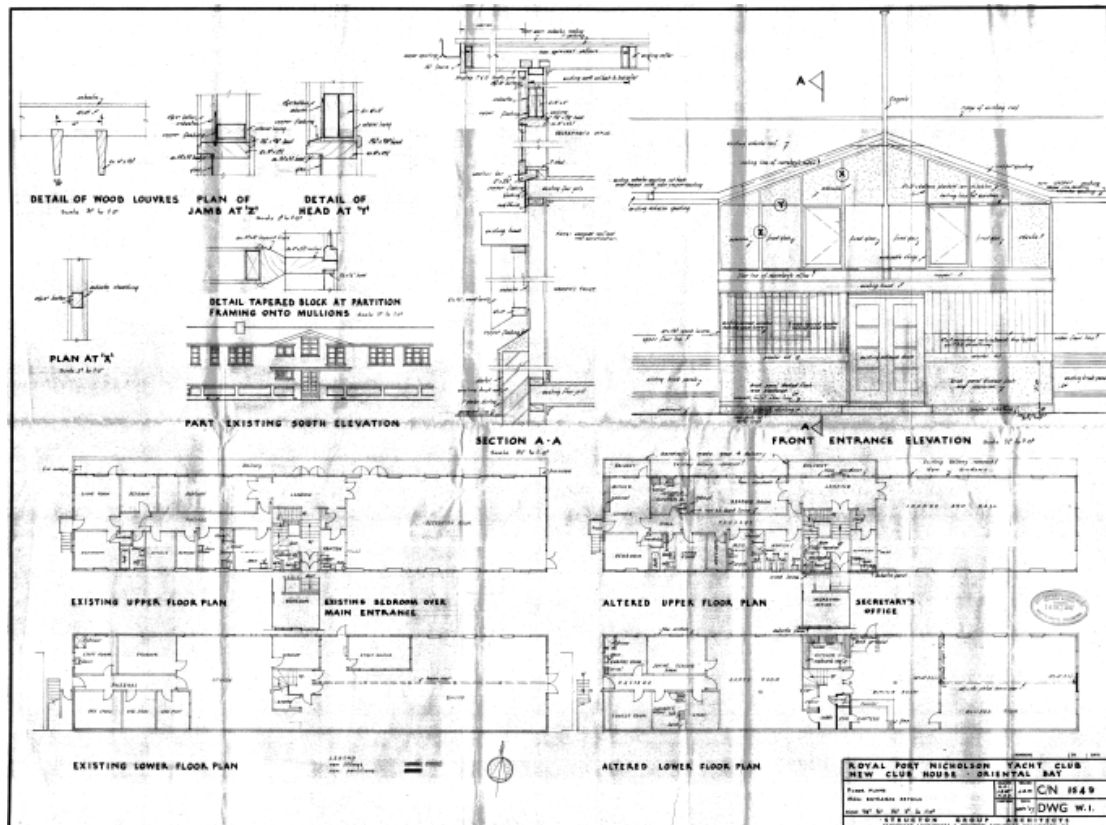


Photograph by Duncan Winder, 1970, ATL, ref DW-4121-F

1.2 Timeline of modifications

- 1957 Internal alterations and conversion to a clubhouse for Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club
- 1958 Adding a starters box to the building at roof level
- 1964 Internal alterations to the lower floor
- 1971 Internal alterations to the lower floor
- 1987 Significant additions and alterations to the building by Interact Architects
- 1988 External canopy added on the seaward side
- 1999 Deck on seaward side extended
- 2003 Alterations to provide a kitchen on the lower ground floor

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



2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

Of the original American Forces building the form particularly that of the roof with its hipped gables, remains to indicate its origin. It has been completely refurbished inside, and reclad outside with new naturally finished weatherboards and aluminium windows. On the landward side, the building rests on the old brick wall that runs alongside the footpath.³

2.2 Materials

- Timber construction
- Sea wall is incorporated into the building as a strip foundation
- Weatherboard cladding
- Aluminium windows (replaced timber windows in 1987)

2.3 Setting

One of the most distinctive views of Wellington is that of the Clyde Quay boat harbour with the timber houses of Mt Victoria behind, and St Gerard's Monastery and Chapel presiding over all from the bush-clad cliff above Oriental Parade. The view encapsulates the elements of harbour setting, timber houses, steep topography and landmark sites that the city is renowned for.

The boat harbour is formed by natural and man-made features. The south side follows the gentle curve of the original shoreline, with the land rising steeply behind to McFarlane and Hawker Streets. Prominent landmark buildings enclose the ends of the boat harbour. To the north, low sea walls are all that separate the boat harbour from the waters of Port Nicholson. It is a contained space, clearly demarcated by these features, with the boats at anchor as the centerpiece.⁴

3.0 Sources

Cochran, Chris and Four Decades Conservation, *Clyde Quay Boat Harbour Wellington: Conservation Plan*, 2005

Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, Accessed October 2012
<http://www.rpnyc.org.nz/index.php/club/membership/history>

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

³ Wellington City Council, "Clyde Quay Boat Harbour Precinct – Clubhouse, Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club"

⁴ Ibid

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?*

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 Clubhouse is part of one of the most distinctive views of Wellington. Clyde Quay boat harbour with the timber houses of Mt Victoria behind, and St Gerard's Monastery and Chapel presiding over all from the bush-clad cliff above Oriental Parade is very iconic.
- Clyde Quay boat harbour brings maritime architecture into close proximity with inner city housing, a juxtaposition that occurs in few other New Zealand cities.

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 Clubhouse contributes to the Clyde Quay Boat Harbour Heritage Area. It also is an existing example of a building constructed in the Wellington region specifically for military purposes during the Second World War.

Historic Value:

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

- The building is associated with the US Marines stationed in New Zealand during the Second World War. It is also associated with the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club that was founded in 1883 and has been based at the boat harbour since 1905.

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

- The building is associated with military activity in New Zealand during the Second World War. It is also associated with local, national and international sailors and yacht racing such as the Global Ocean Race and the Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race.

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?*

Social Value:

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

- The Clyde Quay Boat Harbour is an iconic and easily identifiable collection of buildings in Wellington. The achievements and standing of the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club also adds to the esteem of the collection of maritime buildings.

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?*

- The clubhouse has traditional and cultural values for the sailing community in Wellington given its association with the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club and other early yacht clubs, and the national and international achievements of associated members.

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?*

- Yachting is fundamental part of New Zealand's maritime history and forms part of New Zealand's identity. The prominence and longevity of the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club with yachting in New Zealand is well known and the clubhouse is a bastion of the sailing community in Wellington.

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?*

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?

- The building is important internationally due to its association with the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, the prominent role the club plays in yachting in New Zealand, and the achievements of its members.

5.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

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

Background research

00058:4 3:C2163	103 Oriental Parade, internal alterations and convert to club house	Owner: RPN Yacht Club Inc. Builder: L Moore and Co. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Application value: £1,200.	Building Permit/Consent	27 Nov 1957
00058:6 4:C3196	103 Oriental Parade, club house additions	Owner: Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club. Builder: P Ash. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Application value: £200. Note: Work is for adding a starters box to the building at roof level.	Building Permit/Consent	30 Jun 1958
00058:1 05:C508 1	103 Oriental Parade, reconstruction of boat sheds	Owner: Wellington Harbour Board. Builder: Wellington Harbour Board. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Application value: £2,925. Note: Work is for demolition of hostel and	Building Permit/Consent	14 Jul 1959

		rebuilding the boat sheds beneath it. These are the boat sheds behind the slipway.		
00058:3 43:C147 59	103 Oriental Parade, internal alterations to lower floor	Owner: Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club. Builder: Addison and Gallagher. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Application value: £1,000	Building Permit/Consent	27 May 1964
00058:7 45:C337 28	103 Oriental Parade, internal alterations lower floor	Owner: Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club. Builder: HW Broe Ltd. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Application value: \$8,600	Building Permit/Consent	23 Aug 1971
00059:1 07:D667 8	103 Oriental Bay, additions and alterations	Owner: Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club. Applicant: L T McGuinness. Architect: Interact Architects. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Project value: \$800,000.	Building Permit/Consent	06 Apr 1987
00059:6 37:D864 4	103 Oriental Parade, yacht club addition - canopy	Owner: Wellington Harbour Board. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Application value: \$8,300	Building Permit/Consent	1988
00078:7 62:3801 7	103 Oriental Parade, additions and alterations	Owner: Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club. Applicant: Studio of Pacific Architecture. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Application value: \$11,000	Building Permit/Consent	1997
00078:1 051:4331 8	103 Oriental Parade, additions and alterations	Legal Description: Sec 1 SO 24076. Note: This is for the old club house at the eastern end of the section.	Building Permit/Consent	1998
00078:7 73:5897 8	103 Oriental Parade, deck extension	Owner: Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club. Applicant: Studio of	Building Permit/Consent	1999

		Pacific Architecture. Legal description: Section 1 SO 24076. Application value: \$24,000		
00078:1 202:110 030	103 Oriental Parade, alterations to provide kitchen, lower ground floor	Owner: Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club. Applicant: Penny Kerr. Legal Description: Sec 1 SO 24076. Application Value: \$40,000.	Building Permit/Consent	2003
SR Code	SR Type	SRI Description	SRI Status	Current Updated
27944	Bldg WOF		Waiting On WoF	9/03/2012
38017	Bldg Cons<500K	Proposed Additions and Alterations to existing premises	Completed	20/02/200 2
43318	Bldg Cons<500K	Additions and alterations	Completed	11/07/2003
79984	General Info	Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club Slipway	Completed	28/08/200 1
108574	Bldg Cons<500K	To erect a marquee - Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, Clyde Quay Marina.	Completed	10/01/2005
110030	Bldg Cons<500K	Alterations to provide kitchen.	Completed	3/05/2004
192794	Bdg StrengthInv		NOT Earthquake Prone	3/06/2009
200366	Bdg StrengthInv	Bldg A - RPN Yacht Clubhouse - Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club.	Potentially Earthquake Prone	1/08/2009
202837	RC - Compl Cert	1. Certificate of Compliance: Repairs and maintenance to boat sheds, including replacing a window	Issued	2/12/2009