



Phillipstown Walks

Route # 3

Changing Workplaces

During Phillipstown's history as a suburb, it has been home to a wide variety of working environments. This walk highlights some of those workplaces, including colonial-era plumbing projects, former & current work-from-home businesses, old factory sites and current entrepreneurial innovations.

For your safety please be aware of heavy traffic on Tuam St. We recommend crossing with care & watching for cyclists.



Christchurch's first outfall drain

(Tuam/Harrow St to corner of Bordesley St)



This stormwater drain is actually part of Christchurch's very first sewage outfall, built 1871-1874!

Drainage has always been a big problem here due to being built on a swamp. Prior to the 1870s, cesspits & outhouses or just chamberpots emptied into the street were the norm.

The city eventually employed 'nightmen' with wooden wagons to haul waste out & bury it at the town edge, but disease & water contamination continued.

Christchurch Drainage Board was formed in 1875 & we got NZ's first complete city-wide sewer system in 1882. Proper flushing arrived in 1909 but sewage wasn't yet treated, contaminating Ngā Tahu's fishing grounds.

The first outfall down Tuam St was a closed, egg-shaped brick channel, leading to this open drain across to Bordesley St (timber-lined, concreted later in 1930s), then a line down Linwood Ave out to Bromley. The old brick sewer was rediscovered in 2016 during a major post-quake replacement of water mains (photo below).

It's interesting to think about differences in tools. Today we use mechanical diggers, electric drills & CCTV inspection cameras. Back in the 1870s they just had muscle power, picks, shovels & horse-wagons.



Credit: Underground Overground Archaeology

Ernest Adams Bakery

Most of this block was once part of the famous Ernest Adams Bakery. Its founder Ernest Adams was born 1892 in England, and came to Christchurch in 1921. The Ernest Adams Ltd brand was created in 1922.



Credit: Te Ara.govt.nz

The firm expanded to become the South Island's largest bakery, adopting new technology & maintaining the founder's high standards. This 1973 photo does show how food handling requirements have changed since then! Many local residents worked at the factory, either full-time or as holiday/pocket-money jobs.

Ernest's childhood experience of hardship when his father's bakery business failed led him to support multiple charities & carefully ensure his workers' financial welfare through the Depression & WWII. Ernest was awarded an OBE in 1962 for his philanthropic work.

Adams retired in 1965 but still regularly visited until his death in 1976. Ernest Adams Ltd was bought by giant bakery conglomerate Goodman Fielder in 1999. Most of the product line was suddenly discontinued in Jun 2022, but will be fondly remembered by many. The main factory building has been reinvented as the Tuck cloud kitchen (section above right). The remainder of site is now occupied by martial arts facilities, a dog-care facility, church, ballet studio & auto-repair business.

Canterbury Steamworks

11 Harrow St
Phone: 027 266 8417



Niven Shuker's home-based business specialises in steampunk art and gadgetry. His fence is covered with an eyecatching collage of huge wooden cog-wheels.

Mr Shuker creates truly unique artworks, toys, vehicles, accessories and steampunk

'weaponry' from found items, discarded metalwork, bone, and household objects. He has exhibited his creations in various local galleries and also at community events like the Lyttelton Festival of Lights.

Niven's freelance workshop is a good example of the many small-to-medium businesses that make up the bulk of New Zealand's economy. It also reflects a growing move towards working from home, particularly post-pandemic. This echoes the way most skilled craftspeople in the past worked from or near their residences, prior to the introduction of industrialisation and factories.

To see some examples of Niven's amazing art pieces, visit him at:

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Canterbury-Steamworks/100063546068684/>



The Pumphouse

544 Tuam St
8am-4.30pm
Mon-Fri, 9-1 Sat
Phone: 389 6638



These beautiful structures are an event venue & building recycling yard, with a curious history. Like the historic Tuam St drain, they actually began as part of a huge effort in the late 1880s to improve health by removing human waste from the city.



Credit: Christchurch City Libraries CCL PhotoCD 17, IMG0029

No.1 Pumphouse (photo at right) was built to house steam-driven pumps & a collection tank, shifting effluent from central Chch out through the new sewer system towards the estuary. It became fully operational in 1882. In 1957 the pumps were decommissioned due to construction of the processing plant out at Bromley, but the site continued to be used as a depot until the Drainage Board finally sold it in 1989.

Paddy & Jackie Snowdon now own the Pumphouse and run a demolition & salvage business from the adjacent yard. Their team have slowly been restoring the buildings to their amazing former glory, including a full earthquake strengthening & repair programme 2017-2019. The Pumphouse also houses a privately-owned collection of architectural antiques and is starting to become an event venue. <https://thepumphouse.co.nz/>

Tuck (Tuam St Cloud Kitchen)

466 Tuam St
10am - 12am Mon-Sun
Phone: 021 272 7776



The extremely colourful Tuck building is a great new Tuam St landmark. Currently housing commercial kitchens, it actually began life as a baking factory. Elements of the adjacent historical Ernest Adams offices can be seen in the martial arts facility next door (photo at right).



Tuck is short for "Tuam Cloud Kitchen". The company offers 24-hour leases on variously-sized, fully-equipped commercial kitchens, with all maintenance & waste removal included. They also hire out smaller kitchens for one-off event catering.

Food delivery apps like Uber Eats and general home delivery requests have soared during the covid-19 pandemic. Many restaurants, takeaway outlets and caterers have needed extra cooking & prep space. It's also a good solution for smaller operators who had to find cheaper premises due to covid-19's impact on the hospitality industry. As at Jun 2022, at least 14 different businesses are already operating out of the building.

The premises also include a delivery drivers' lounge, meeting rooms and shared refrigeration space.

<https://www.tuck.kiwi/>

Purple Weka Cafe

48 Fitzgerald Ave
6am-3pm M-F, 8am-3pm Sat-Sun
Phone: 366 0258

The Purple Weka really reflects how Chch small businesses have had to continuously adapt over recent years - first to the 2010-11 quakes & rebuild then to the covid-19 pandemic. Both have been particularly tough on hospitality, but the Purple Weka triumphs: in Stuff's 2022 'Love Your Local' campaign, they were voted NZ's Most Popular Cafe!

Current owner Stewart McDougall took over in 2011, after his son & daughter-in-law found they were expecting a baby. The cafe's always been at #48 but had to operate out of a carpark shipping container for 2 years while the building was repaired. Weathering 6am starts through the wind, rain & snow, they finally moved back into their cosy downstairs space in 2013.

Stewart specialises in traditional 'Kiwi tucker' dishes such as lambs fry, mince on toast, and whitebait fritters. Weekday traffic is mostly from adjacent businesses & Fitzgerald Ave passersby but weekend regulars come in from as far afield as Rolleston & Rangiora.

The cafe's current focus is on surviving covid-19, using shortened opening hours to help manage staffing disruptions. Perhaps the future might bring a potential food truck expansion, once the pandemic eases?



<https://www.purplewekacafe.co.nz/>

Stacey & Hawker Bakery (now a Quality Bakers distribution centre)



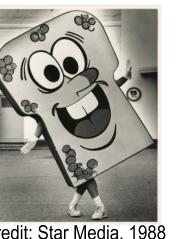
38 Essex St was originally also a famous bakery site, and like Ernest Adams was later bought out by Goodman Fielder.

Founder George Hawker came from a London family of bakers & moved to NZ in 1865. Stacey & Hawker were already famous by 1916, winning Christchurch's Industrial Exhibition Championship Cup for their bread (against 300 others). George's son Harry also became a baker, opening the Essex St site in the 1930s.



Credit: Star Media, 1973

Stacey & Hawker Ltd traded as 'SX Bakery', as a play on the street name. Their 'SX' brand was stamped on every loaf of bread they produced. They even had their very own mascot, 'Snackmate' (photo at right). Their tagline was "the bread with the nutty flavour!"



Credit: Star Media, 1988

During the 1950s, SX used NBC Electric vans (photo at left) for deliveries around town - they were zippy and easy to park! In the 1960s they opened an office across the road at 41 Essex St, later taken over by an architecture firm.

The firm were eventually bought out by giant food conglomerate Goodman Fielder, and these days the site is a distribution centre for GF subsidiary Quality Bakers.



Credit: Phil Braithwaite

Colonial residence-businesses (388-396 Tuam St)

European settlers began building wooden villas along this section of Tuam St in the 1880s and 1890s.

By looking at the occupations of the owners & tenants, we can see a wide cross-section of the kind of work these residents did. Some of them are jobs which no longer exist today. The men's occupations included carpenter, draper (cloth seller), clothes presser, labourer, painter, whitesmith (tin metal-worker), railway employee, electrician and engine fitter (mechanic).

As was usual for that time, the women don't seem to have worked outside the home. However, they still found ways to make money. Widows & married women leased out property and rented rooms to boarders, or 'took in washing' as a home-based laundry. Other women living in Tuam St took advantage of the contemporary craze for the occult and worked as a freelance spiritualist, clairvoyant medium, or even "genuine Egyptian character reader"!



Credit: Overground Underground Archaeology

When the old wooden houses were demolished, the site briefly became an archaeological dig. Local firm Overground Underground Archaeology found all sorts of interesting items, including this clay tobacco pipe and shoe-shaped glass ink-well (used with a dip pen).

The site is now used by Vynco Industries Ltd, electrical component manufacturer founded in the 1990s.