

saturday magazine

# New role for historic building

## 'Gables' home for art

New Zealand's oldest standing hospital building will reopen its doors to the public tomorrow — but serving a vastly different role to its original one.

The Gables, in Brooklands Park, New Plymouth, has become the new home for the Taranaki Society of Arts.

Forced to move from its former location in Brougham St because of a planned government building, the society has set up its headquarters at The Gables.

The president of the society, Mr Harry Fryer, said members were very pleased with the new venue.

"This has a much wider scope than the building we were in," he said. "There is room to move here."

The society has spread its display of paintings, pottery, china, painting, batik and felt work over three downstairs rooms in the building.

The Taranaki Museum is providing some historical interpretation boards, of which two will be completed for the opening.

The museum director, Mr Ron Lambert, said there would be a small selection of mid-19th century medical

**RIGHT:** This room is one of three galleries set up by the Taranaki Society of Arts. Local paintings and crafts will be on display at the Gables.

and surgical instruments on display.

Up narrow stairs, the two top rooms will be furnished to reflect two periods in the building's history.

One room will be made up to resemble the room Dr Alexander Macchane used when he lived in as colonial surgeon at the hospital.

The other room will be furnished with articles from the period 1904-1914, to acknowledge Newton King's connection with the building, the time the building was first moved to its present site.

"The building wouldn't be standing

now if it wasn't for the Newton King family," said Mr Lambert.

The Gables will be opened by a former city councillor, Mrs Audrey Gale, OBE, at 2.30pm tomorrow.

The Mayor of New Plymouth, Mr David

**Pictures: Glenn Jeffrey**

Lambert and the chairman of Taranaki regional committee of the Historic Places Trust, Mr Ron Lambert, will speak at the official opening.

The New Plymouth City Band will play and people will be free to

look around the building once the plaque has been unveiled.

The Gables was built in 1847 and is the only survivor of four colonial hospitals built in New Zealand at that time. It was originally sited in Mangorei Rd, too far

local Maori chief and by 1858 the number of patients had fallen dramatically.

After the Maori land wars, the Taranaki Provincial Council took over the management of the hospital.

By 1880 the building had become an old men's home and the Hospital and Charitable Aid Board was responsible for its administration. In 1903, the inmates were transferred elsewhere.

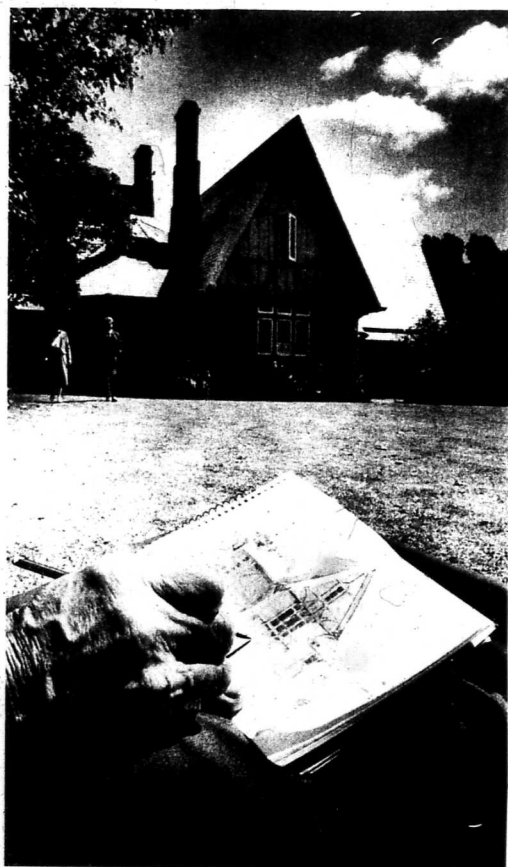
The land on which the hospital stood then became an education reserve and in July, 1904, the hospital was put up for auction Mrs

Newton King bought the building for 10 pounds and had it moved to Brooklands where it presently stands.

On March 10, 1834, the building, as part of the land which now forms Brooklands Park, was gifted to the city by the trustees of the Newton King estate.

The first major restoration work and redesigning of the garden was done in the mid-1960s.

The city council leased the building to various private tenants until 1983 when it decided to restore The Gables and investigate its future use.



Impressions of a colonial hospital. The president of the Taranaki Society of Arts, Harry Fryer, sketches The Gables.



**LEFT:** THE GABLES from the side. The small shed in the foreground is a replica of the building which stood beside the hospital on its original site in Mangorei Rd and which was used for the hospital's morgue.

**BELOW:** The Director of Parks and Recreation, Alan Jellyman, displays a sombre reminder of the past. The medical kit belongs to Dr Bill Frengley, of New Plymouth, and was used by his grandfather, Dr Joseph Frengley, who was a medical officer of health with the Health Department in Auckland at the turn of the century.

**The SKYLINE CENTRE**  
GARAGES, SHEDS, WORKSHOPS & RUMPUS ROOMS

Australasia's Biggest Selling Garages

Garage Workshops.....	from \$2153
Single Garages.....	from \$1743
Double Garages.....	from \$2585

Available galvanneal unpainted or pre-painted colorcoat

No Deposit! Finance Available

**TIMBER FRAME SHEDS**  
large range of sizes \$ **919** priced from

Phone your North Taranaki Distributors NOW  
Phone 88959 NP A/H Ph 71015 NP  
OPEN SATURDAY 9AM TO 12 NOON  
Car Devon and Smart Rds (Opp Fertilizer Works)

FOR FRIENDLY ADVICE AND BROCHURES OR FREE ON SITE, NO OBLIGATION QUOTE.



**OPEN 7 DAYS**

**FUCHSIAS**  
in hanging baskets  
for that semi-shady position. Beautiful plants only **\$10.40**

Add beauty and interest to your garden with  
**MINIATURE ROSES**  
**\$1.95** each

**WOODEN TUBS**  
We have a good selection of tubs and troughs for outdoor and patio planting. Priced from **\$28.90**

**I LOVE MY PLANT**

**DUNCAN & DAVIES**  
THE PLANT PEOPLE  
**Westown Garden Centre**  
Cnr Tukapou St & Wallat Rd, Westown. Ph: 83199

MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8.30-5.00 SATURDAY 9a.m. - 4p.m. - SUNDAY 10a.m. - 4p.m.