

## LEISURE

## Of passing interest

Historical features in our landscape seen by Puke Ariki heritage collections manager **Kelvin Day**.

### Welsh McCarthy Building, Hawera

**T**he Welsh McCarthy building in High St, Hawera, dates from 1911. However, the business dates from 1903 when lawyers Richard Dawson Welsh and Bernard McCarthy went into partnership.

Mr Ernest Arthur Pacey was both the architect and builder and at the time of the building's opening it was said to have cost £1400.

Over the years the firm has gone through a number of changes of partnership. Mr E M Beechey joined the firm in 1920 and later went on to become a Maori Land Court judge.

John Houston joined the partnership in 1922 and remained with them until he died in 1962. He was a noted Taranaki historian and a keen horticulturist who was awarded an OBE in 1961.

The current building is not the



first on this site. A marble plaque on the corner of the building reminds us that this was also, along with the neighbouring Hawera Library section, the site of the Hawera Stockade, approval for the erection of which was given in 1869.

The site was originally a slight hill, which is why the location was

chosen. Completed in 1870 the stockade surrounded two blockhouses, each measuring 15 x 8 metres, between which was a square courtyard. The stockade was made from matai and stood 2.5m high.

This was the headquarters of the No 2 Company Patea Militia until 1874 after which it probably housed

volunteer units. In 1924 an old Hawera settler told the local newspaper that this stockade was the "first fort, the first school, the first church and the first town hall which this town possessed". The stockade was probably pulled down in the early 1880s and the small hill on which it sat was levelled.