

LEISURE

Of passing interest

Historic features in our landscape observed by the director of Puke Ariki, **Kelvin Day.**

Egmont Flour Mill

New Plymouth's first flour mill was established in 1844, three years after the arrival of the Plymouth Company settlers. Known as the Alpha mill, it was quickly followed over the next nine years by three other mills within the New Plymouth settlement. The final flour mill to be built in New Plymouth was the Egmont Steam Mill. Constructed at the junction of Courtenay, Currie and Powderham streets, it was to be the largest and most expensive mill erected in Taranaki. The brothers William and Frederick Webster, along with William King Hulke, began constructing the mill in 1865. Despite being adjacent to the Huatoki Stream, the mill was powered by a steam engine. The first milling took place in March 1867 and as well as locally grown wheat the firm also brought in South Island grain. The mill operated with varying degrees of success until it was sold in 1905 to the Auckland firm of L.D. Nathan. From 1928 until



1965 the building served as the store and shop for the Farmer's Co-op. Following the departure of the Farmer's Co-op the building housed

a number of small businesses and was, for a while, the offices of the local branch of the National Party. In 1986-87 the building was upgraded

and became The Mill, a bar and restaurant. This business continued until early 2010, but since then the building has remained closed.