“Abenomics”, the economic policy platform of the Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, began in January this year and is still very much a work in progress.

Before assessing the chances of it working and what effect this new policy may have on Australia, I will deal briefly with what the policy platform comprises.

Mr Abe refers to the three “arrows” of his platform, being:
1. loose monetary policy;
2. loose fiscal policy; and
3. structural reform.

Arrow 1: Loose monetary policy
Since the ‘90s, Japan has experienced deflation. This is a very economically destructive force whereby demand is not sufficient to maintain the nominal price of most goods and services. As a result, production declines, which tends to lead to a decline in everything else, including prices, and so a vicious cycle becomes entrenched until some sufficiently disruptive change emerges to provide a “circuit breaker”. Nothing radical has emerged in the last 15 years of so other than a period of 12 months or so when Japan got caught up in the last feverish days of the worldwide stockmarket boom which peaked in October 2007, so far for most of that time inflation has been between -1 and 1% per annum.

In that context, to replace the Bank of Japan’s inflation goal of 1% per annum with a goal of 2% is indeed radical. As interest rates are already effectively zero, to adopt an even more accommodative monetary policy setting, the Bank of Japan has now begun a program of purchasing assets, including private sector instruments, funding “unlimited” bank lending and buying foreign bonds.

Arrow 2: Fiscal policy
Here Mr Abe’s proposals appear to be relative gymnastics. He wishes to implement a budget stimulus of 2% – 2.5% of GDP and then claw that stimulus back and reduce the budget deficit by half by 2015, turning the budget to surplus by 2020. The bulk of the stimulus will be in the form of long term public works, in particular post earthquake reconstruction. The attempt to establish counter-cyclical policy such that when the economy improves, the government automatically takes stimulus back and reduce the budget deficit by half by 2015, is indeed a crisis that requires national sacrifice.

The reform will thus involve individual sacrifice for public benefit and will have to be sold politically. Historically this has not happened. Revitalisation schemes have been promoted since at least 1999 to little effect. This in turn will tend to lead to both a devaluation of the currency and an increase in the cost of servicing the debt. This could well lead to a destructive cycle of a falling currency coupled with an ever increasing cost of servicing debt.

The general population will have to finally gain a sense that there is indeed a crisis that requires national sacrifice.

Arrow 3: Structural reforms
This is really the crucial element of the platform, for if there is not widespread comprehensive reform the loose monetary policy will not stimulate demand and the fiscal policy will therefore also have little effect, meaning that the economy will remain weak, debt will become unsustainable, the yen will collapse and “hot” money will flow to Australia amongst other countries. In this way we could even have a re-run of the 1996 East Asian Financial Crisis.

Apart from a $13 trillion yen supplementary budget passed in January, which included $10 trillion yen of new spending, essentially on post earthquake reconstruction, details of the medium term strategy are expected to emerge this month.

Proposals for reforms in the areas of health, IT, economic partnerships, energy, global warming, industrial renewal, labour (particularly female labour) participation, agriculture and resources are expected.

Outlook
Essentially, the world awaits the firing of the third arrow. The first arrow can be implemented fairly straightforwardly, especially following Mr Abe’s nomination of Haruhiko Kuroda as Governor of the Bank of Japan in March. The second arrow is again straightforward, at least in the short term. However, neither in and of themselves contribute to growth.

The third arrow, structural reform, needs to be effective in boosting Japan’s productivity to counter the effects of Japan’s rapidly ageing population. In addition, welfare needs to be made sustainable, which essentially means that only those truly in need should receive it. Typically this means an increase in the retirement age and mean test type restrictions on eligibility etc.

The reforms will thus involve individual sacrifice for public benefit and will have to be sold politically. Historically this has not happened. Revitalisation schemes have been promoted since at least 1999 to little or no effect.

Effect on Australia in particular and South East Asia generally
Loose monetary policy and fiscal stimulus without effective structural reform will simply further increase Japanese government debt without boosting the economy in any meaningful way, making repayment of that debt more difficult.

This in turn will tend to lead to both a devaluation of the currency and an increase in the cost of servicing the debt. This could well lead to a destructive cycle of a falling currency coupled with an ever increasing cost of servicing debt.

Australia in particular will be watching closely. We will not so easily play a stabilising role as we did during the 1996 East Asian Financial Crisis, and a re-run of crisis of those proportions could well mean that, with Chinese growth now slowing, the world would be reliant on some form of rescue from the US economy, which has recently shown the faintest glimmers of hope of a better economic future.
HE COMMITTEE HAS MAINTAINED the high standards of events established last year, and it has been very pleasing to see such consistently good attendances at these functions as well.

As our renowned Vice President, David de Rozenker-Apted, mentions in his note at page 3, a full calendar of events for the rest of 2013 has been emailed to you recently and I’m sure that the second half of the year will be as good as the first. I also note that David has also emailed you all regarding the upcoming tour of Goulburn over the October long weekend. If last year’s Mudgee regional tour is anything to go by (and David has provided us with a short review at page 14) it will be an event simply not to be missed.

Late last year we were extremely privileged to have Claudia Chan Shaw not only provide us with a particularly entertaining presentation but also personally sign copies of her new book Collectionoma: From Objects of Desire to Marvellous Obsession on the night.

In this edition our Vice President reports on the opening night of Vivian Chan Shaw: 40 Years / A Retrospective, an exhibition of the highlights of Claudia’s mother’s extensive career in the design industry. David’s fascinating feature article begins at page 8.

Larisa Sarkadi has once again provided us with a quality article, this time looking at heritage architecture in Brisbane. As that capital city emerges from a long downturn and looks forward to a long period of growth, particularly in the property sector, her contribution is timely, as development pressures will no doubt come to the fore over the next several years.

The Society has conducted a number of walks in Newcastle and the wealth of heritage architecture there can be surprising. As our esteemed President, Roy Lumby puts it at the beginning of his essay on a number of striking examples, “The City of Newcastle has a sophisticated and rich architectural heritage that is the equal of any Australia”. Explore some architectural gems with Roy from page 16.

For those of you who would like to know what David and Roy get up to when they are not working their fingers to the bone for the Society, have a look at the top right hand corner of page 18. What they are doing looks like tremendous fun, I wish I’d been there!

Just a reminder that the Society has embraced technology in organising its events and these are now listed and administered through Eventbrite, a superb web based facility specifically geared to the running of group events like ours. The website address is www.twentieth.eventbrite.com.au and from this website you can keep track of all Society events and keep right up to the minute as to the latest developments affecting you as a Society member. You can also book online and pay online for any Society event, thus securing your place for even the most popular of activities. Keep an eye out too for everyones, a snappy one or two page publication which sets out upcoming events over the next few months.

We have again been able to provide you with a bumper 20 page newsletter due to the devoted contributions of a few of us. We encourage contributions of any sort from all of you and on page 19 we explain how to submit text and/or pictures. We are also happy to have news of upcoming events etc.,... so please feel free to contact us.

The next edition is sure to be something special, so why not be part of it?

John Dymond

The president and I would like to thank you for your continuing support, by way of your Membership renewals and for the excellent attendance at events.

We also thank those of you who continue to include a donation to the Society with your Membership renewal. This is very much appreciated and has moved the President and me to propose to the Management Committee that we channel those funds into a specific project.

The resultant decision was that the Society will publish a “Learned Journal” containing erudite articles and contributions that specifically address education and the raising of awareness of our dwindling heritage and sensitive stock of items which are increasingly under threat by the unscrupulous and greedy.

Of course we are not only speaking of the built environment, there are gardens which are summarily “bollicated” to make way for concreted and tiled areas populated by the latest ‘potted’ plant choices of the so-called “celebrity landscape designer”. We should also not forget that other disciplines are under assault, such as Sculpture, especially significant public items that have been and still are totally ignored by the local councils in whose areas they happen to be installed.

Then there is the “re-location” of important artistic elements that were placed central stage on the façades of prominent buildings and are now hidden around the corner to avoid a “blemish” on the new owners “flashpoints”. It is interesting to note that the original sculptures are still looking pretty good after decades subjected to the elements, and in five years (if we are lucky) the new or re-generated edifice is marred due to the use of cheap materials.

We certainly finished 2012 with a bit of flair. Our President delivered a PowerPoint presentation at our August AGM on one of Australia’s most important architects, Emil Lawrence Sodersten. The September/October long weekend saw an expertly arranged regional trip to Mudgee and surrounding areas by Stuart Read, Gail Conder and Geoffrey Douglas, supported by local historians and property owners.

To top things off with panache, charm and joie de vivre we welcomed Claudia Chan Shaw, from the hugely successful ABC TV series Collectors, in November to give a presentation entitled ‘Collectomania: From objects of Desire to Marvellous Obsession’. We were also thrilled that our members were able to purchase Claudia’s book and have it personally signed on the night.

It is a testament to the Society that we are able to mount such events and invite high profile presenters to deliver quality talks to our members and the wider community. We have emailed our Calendar of Events for 2013 and we trust that you will not be disappointed with the offerings.

We know that whilst many of you have already pencilled in the dates, we encourage you to keep the Calendar within easy reach to ensure that you do not miss out.

We published another excellent newsletter for Spring 2012. We had an insightful contribution from Graham Swann on the Law Courts, an informative article with great images by Geoffrey Douglass on St Monica’s War Memorial Cathedral in Cairns, an important conservation-based article by Paul Paech on Bondi Beach Art Deco, a stunning piece by Larisa Sarkadi on fashions of the 20s and 30s, a great book review by respected architect Howard Tanner on the works of Robin Dods and the first of our regular spots highlighting a significant building in New South Wales.

Recapping on events, I do wish to draw your attention to a short review on page 14 that I have penned with the assistance of those who attended the Mudgee Regional Tour. The arrangements undertaken by the working group, the local experts and home owners were quite substantial, demanding considerable personal commitment. Both Roy and I are indebted to all concerned and were pleased to support a motion in the Management Committee that each contributor be thanked by way of a “Gift Membership” for twelve months.

We are planning a few upgrades to our website to increase interactivity and content which we will share with you a bit down the track. Some additional features for The News and eNews will be regular ‘mini series’ or ‘snapshots’ of interest to focus on issues important to the Society covering a wider array of design disciplines.

Do you have a small article of between 400 and 600 words with 3 to 4 images that you feel would be of interest to our members – are you concerned about a building under threat in your locality, or have you spotted an item of interest in your travels? If so, please email our editor, John Dymond, at john@twentieth.org.au or send him via our post office box.

If, by any chance, you were wondering where this image came from (especially that very red object behind my head), please turn to page 18, Memories... for a brief explanation.

David de Rozenker-Apted
PANNING FOR GOLD

Looking for heritage architecture in Brisbane

By Larisa Sarkadi

BRISBANE OF THE 21ST CENTURY looks every bit a modern, cosmopolitan city. This image is unquestionably conveyed by its central business district and its neighbourhoods fronting the sinuous Brisbane River. Densely packed high-rise buildings dominate the skyline. So, what is left of the city’s previous life as a rather conservative seat of the quintessentially colonial Queensland government?

It seems that its architectural heritage of two previous centuries is fast receding into memory. It should be noted that Brisbane’s impressive neoclassical administrative buildings still stand, albeit, in many cases, no longer occupied by the departments for which they were meant. Following are just a few examples to illustrate this point.

The former Treasury Building was designed in 1883 by JJ Clark, then Government Architect. Constructed between 1885 and 1928 in Italian Renaissance style, the building is an imposing structure occupying one of the most prominent city blocks. Somewhat continuing in its role as the financial instrument of the government, the building is now occupied by the Conrad Treasury Casino, its lobby adorned by an extravagant crystal chandelier. Down the street, the former Lands Department building now houses the lobby adorned by an extravagant crystal chandelier. Down the street, the former Lands Department building now houses the Conrad Treasury Hotel.

Nearby, the former Government Printing Offices constructed in 1911, are no longer used for their original purpose either. Sculptural details on the facade of the building were designed by the Public Works architect EE Smith. The building is known as Printers’ Devil for an exquisitely carved keystone of the arch over its main entrance. This moniker whimsically refers to the evil forces at play which could be blamed for inevitable mistakes in the final printed product.

Another of the former administrative structures “reborn” for the new age is the former Customs House. Designed in 1886 by Charles McLay, the Government Architect at the time, in Victorian Free Classical style, the building was constructed in 1889 on the bend of the Brisbane River.

It is now occupied by the University of Queensland and is used as a function and conference centre. The building’s Victorian interior has been extensively refurbished, first back in 1947, thus displaying some streamlined Art Deco style touches.

The City Hall, built over a number of years and opened in 1930, is one of the most prominent buildings of Brisbane. Before its completion, the citizens of Brisbane had to adjust their timepieces by the firing of a time-gun. After installation of four clock dials and a chime bell on the top of its 92m high tower, the time could be heard and seen throughout the day. Designed rather conservatively in Classical Revival style, it has a lavish Art Deco-inspired interior and a circular-shaped auditorium. Currently the building is closed for refurbishment.

Beautifully maintained churches, mainly in Gothic Revival style, dot the streets of the Brisbane CBD. The red and white painted Uniting Church building on the corner of Ann and Albert Streets, topped with a 40m spire, was constructed in 1889. In a perfect dialogue between old and new, the church building is now overshadowed by a high-rise office block with ornamental details in bright red on the facade. Further along Ann Street are St Andrew’s Church constructed in 1905 and St John’s Cathedral completed in 1910. In fact, the whole length of Ann Street has more than 6 temples of religion and can be called The Street of Churches of Brisbane.

In parallel with the 20th century development of Sydney, the city of Brisbane had one of its many bridges across the Brisbane River designed by Dr JCC Bradfield of the Sydney Harbour Bridge fame. The 281m long cantilever truss steel Story Bridge was built over a period of 5 years and opened in 1940. It bears the name of John Story who was a former vice-chancellor of the University of Queensland. There are still quite a few commercial buildings of the inter-war period around. The best example is the former McWhirters department store building in Fortitude Valley completed in 1931. Exuberantly decorated with polychrome terracotta, it was designed by Hall and Phillips, the same architectural firm responsible for Brisbane City Hall. Used as the department store until 1988, it has been converted to a mix of residential and commercial premises. In Adelaide Street, in the city centre, the rather charming Brisbane Arcade (1923) displays modernist touches on its stained glass panels and terrazzo finishes.

Also nearby, at 289 Queen Street, is The Manor Apartment building, commissioned by Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Society and completed in 1931. The 11-storey building was designed by Hennessy & Hennessy and has its facade clad with innovative composite stone – a mixture of cement and porphyry. The street facade of the building is extensively decorated with bass reliefs and eagle gargoyles. Conceived originally as an office block, it had several other owners until 1994 when it was converted into furnished apartments. In the city centre, several smaller commercial buildings and the Tattersalls Club are in Art Deco style. The same pale pink composite stone has been used on its 1939-dated facade.

One of the best examples of early modern architecture is a former brewery head office building at 501 Ann Street. Presently occupied by Credit Union Australia, it was designed by H S McDonald and completed in the early 1940s. A seamless fusion of Art Deco and Functionalist elements, the building’s design perfectly addresses its corner position. Another imposing example of the 1930s-1940s brewery-related architecture is the Castlemaine Perkins Fourex Brewery building in Milton.

From the second half of the 19th century, residential suburbs of Brisbane were dominated by the ubiquitous Queensland-style houses. Elevated on thick wooden stilts in response to quite frequent floods and hot Queensland summers, these cottages were often decorated with elaborate timber fretwork. In the 20th century, domestic architecture gradually shifted towards apartment blocks in Art Deco and Spanish Mission styles. Some outstanding examples of inter-war architecture can be found in the southern Brisbane suburb of New Farm. The so-called Coronet Flats were designed by Max Strickland and completed in 1933-1934.
building comprises 9 three-bedroom apartments over three floors behind its elegant facade. Yet another fine example of the 1930s apartment block can be found next to the Coronet Flats along Brunswick Street.

So, if one looks around, there are still treasures of the by-gone years to be found among mostly uniform blandness of modern high-rises. Brisbane Living Heritage booklet hardly mentions any sites of interest dated from the 20th century. It is symptomatic of general neglect and indifference towards this most dynamic period in the history of architecture.
ON THE 6TH OF FEBRUARY, Roy Lumby and I attended the opening of Vivian Chan Shaw 40 Years / A Retrospective, at the Whitehouse Institute of Design in Surry Hills.

The invitation was kindly sent by Claudia Chan Shaw, whom many of you met when she presented ‘Collectomania…From objects of desire to magnificent obsession’ to the Society in November last year at Tusculum.

The exhibition looked back on forty years of her mother’s extraordinary career in the design and crafting of her unique creations which without doubt guarantees her a position as an Australian fashion icon of the twentieth century.

We are pleased to bring you an overview of that exhibition, provided by Claudia and her husband Stewart White, who runs White-works Public Relations.

This exhibition explores four decades of the work of celebrated Australian fashion label, Vivian Chan Shaw, from 1972 to today. It traced garments starting from the first collections, designed in fabric in the 1970s, and followed the transition to the unique hand-loomed knitwear, for which Vivian Chan Shaw has a global reputation. More than 100 milestone garments were on show.

Vivian’s designs draw on her rich and vibrant heritage. Soft draped garments echo the unstructured lines of classical Chinese costume. Themes explored in the exhibition included Chinoiserie, geometrics, signature bold colours and space-dyed blends, appliqué and hand-beading. The collections demonstrated the influence of heritage and its place in Australian society.

Vivian Chan Shaw started her fashion career in Sydney in the 1960s as designer and fashion co-ordinator for leading bridal fabric specialists, René and Canns, and moved on to fashion retail as a manager for the In Shoppe and the House of Merivale.

With this background in design and retail, Vivian opened her boutique Jeunesse in 1972 in the Royal Arcade under the Sydney Hilton Hotel. Here she established a following for her exquisitely detailed designs, made from jersey, silk and panné velvet.

Her hand-made one-off garments caught the attention of interna-
tional stars Dionne Warwick, Bo Derek, Margaux Hemingway and Roberta Flack.

The 1980s saw the designer switch to hand-loomed knitwear and she opened her flagship store in Sydney’s Queen Victoria Building in 1986. The QVB has been the label’s home for the past 26 years.

Claudia Chan Shaw, Vivian’s daughter, officially joined the company as business partner and co-designer in 1986. Together the mother and daughter team became one of Australia’s ground breaking early exporters, selling the label in the USA from as early as 1981.

Iconic American stores Bonwit Teller, Neiman Marcus, I Magnin, Nordstrom and independent boutiques in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles all stocked the distinctive Australian label. Chan Shaw designs have also sold in the UK, Germany, Switzerland and New
Zealand. In 2000, Vivian Chan Shaw added jewellery design to the collections, specialising in dramatic pieces using precious stones – jade, onyx, garnet, lapis lazuli.

In 2009 Vivian was the recipient of the Fashion Group International Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of her work and her contribution to the Australian fashion industry.

Vivian recognised early in her career that to survive in the fickle fashion world, one had to be unique. Her timeless hand-loomed knit designs prompted Sportswear International magazine to call Vivian Chan Shaw “A master of knit who would rival the Missonis.” Australian Harpers Bazaar calls her “The queen of Australian knitwear”.

From early elaborate pieces made in fabric, to the evolution of the artisan hand-loomed knit garments, where the boundaries of craft and fashion are blurred, there is no other designer in the world exploring knitwear with as much depth and sophistication. Vivian Chan Shaw is a true Australian original.
THIS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL EVENT was organised by a special working group from within the Management Committee of the Twentieth Century Heritage Society of NSW, following a reconnoitre to the area in May 2012.

Mudgee (‘Nest in the Hills’ in the Wiradjuri language) in the central west of NSW, is perhaps better known for its mid-19th century gold and pastoralism. However, there’s a surprising array of 20th century heritage, vibrant mining, viticulture and food worth investigating.

On Saturday September 29, those attendees who drove up from Sydney met others from the area and Kandos local historian Colleen O’Sullivan. After a picnic lunch, the event got underway with a tour around Kandos – a 20th century ‘cement town’ mostly built 1913-35, capitalising on deposits of limestone, shale and coal near a railway line. By 1925 the cement works was the largest in the southern hemisphere, employing 450. Its cement helped build the Sydney Harbour Bridge and much of Sydney. Later diversification brought recreation spaces - the park with its concrete rotunda and lovely golf course.

Colleen opened many private gates for the group, and arranged a special visit to the Bicentennial Museum courtesy of its President, Esme Martens. Then a visit to nearby Dabee station outside Rylstone, an early pastoral land grant and homestead. It also has a 20th century wing and ‘makeover front’ and a late 20th century garden of considerable charm. Its manager’s house is pure 1950s. Rylstone itself (1830s+) has a racy 1930s pub and inter-war Council Chambers.

Later that afternoon the group drove to Mudgee to check into Parklands Quality Resort and to prepare for the Heritage Dinner and talks presented by local heritage consultant and historian John Broadley, and Committee member Stuart Read.

Sunday 30th started with a heritage walk in the town centre. We met outside the Regent Theatre for a tour of the building with Barbara Hickson, who was joined by John Broadley for a downtown walk noting 20th century items of interest. This was followed by a lunch at the Mudgee Brewing Company Brasserie, after which the group embarked on a self-drive town tour.

Checking out of the hotel on Monday 1st October, attendees boarded a coach for Gulgong, pausing at various properties and many places of special interest – then returned to the hotel to collect their cars to depart for a special luncheon generously provided by David and Clarissa Mort, after which came the farewells and return to Sydney.

David de Rozenker-Apted

Our invaluable guides for the tours

Esme Martens, President of the Kandos Bicentennial Museum and a local Councillor in Mid Western Regional Council.

John Broadley, author of ‘Historic Houses of Mudgee’ (2012), President of the Mudgee & District Historical Society and a heritage consultant.

Barbara Hickson, a heritage consultant and architect with long experience advising Bathurst Regional Council.
HE CITY OF NEWCASTLE has a sophisticated and rich architectural heritage that is the equal of any in Australia. It boasts fine commercial buildings, impressive blocks of flats, major religious institutions and an outstanding civic and cultural precinct, all situated in an exciting and invigorating townscape.

Prior to 1900 Civic Park was little better than a swamp. It was owned by the AA Company and traversed by a railway line used for transporting coal. In the early years of the twentieth century, timber yards were established on either side of the railway line. Newcastle Council began the leisurely task of acquiring land for Civic Park in 1921 but the railway line was not resumed until 1958 and properties along Darby Street were resumed during the 1960s.

Landscape works then commenced, with the construction of sandstone walls surrounding a grove of trees near the corner of Darby and Laman Streets commemorating the RAAF. The wall was completed along Laman Street in 1968 and forms part of the backdrop for the Captain James Cook Memorial Fountain, for which Newcastle City Council formed a special subcommittee in 1959.

A competition for the fountain was staged in 1961 and noted sculptor Margel Hinder was awarded first place on 8 September 1961 ahead of over 90 other entrants. Construction of the fountain began in September 1965, overseen by architects Wilson & Suters, and on 1 November 1966 it was turned on, prior to the official handover on 11 April 1967.

The fountain was not given its name until 1970. It consists of textured copper applied to a steel structure. Three solid and static shapes are linked by dynamic jets of moving water, which come from different levels to fall between the copper forms and are illuminated to emphasise the linearity of their movement. The backdrop wall is lined with grey-green porphyry from Yass. The fountain is a crucial element in the axis linking the Town Hall and the Newcastle War Memorial Cultural Centre.

The notion of a cultural centre for Newcastle dates to 1936 after the city’s School of Arts Library, its main library, had been criticised the year before. In response, Newcastle Council established a Cultural Centre Advisory Committee to investigate the establishment of a cultural centre incorporating a free public library. The centre was visualised as an integral part of the civic precinct, and in 1938 a site was chosen opposite City Hall. Designs were prepared by the City Architect but progress was halted by the outbreak of World War II. The project revived after the close of hostilities and gained impetus through ophthalmic surgeon Dr Roland Pope’s gift of paintings and books to the City of Newcastle in 1945, conditional on the establishment of a library and art gallery to house the collection.

On 31 July 1945 a public meeting was held at which it was decided that the cultural centre should incorporate a war memorial and the Newcastle War Memorial Cultural Centre Committee was then appointed. A successful public funding appeal was launched and raised £78,753. The Newcastle War Memorial Cultural Centre in Laman Street is the outcome. It was designed by an architectural consortium called Newmec, which included the firms of Castleden & Sara, Pitt & Pitt, Lees & Valentine and Hoskins & Pilgrim.

A foundation stone was laid in June 1949 but construction, carried out under V. Doran Pty Ltd, only commenced in May 1955. The Centre was officially opened by State Governor Lt. Gen. Sir Eric Woodward, on 26 October 1957. It contained a library, an art gallery on the 2nd floor (between 1957 and 1976) and the Conservatorium on the 3rd floor (between 1957 and 1967). The building is axially related to the Town Hall, thus linking the two buildings and Civic Park.

Its restrained exterior features projecting ribs clad in glazed terracotta emerging from plain brick surrounds and a solid curved porch. Bas relief panels are the work of Paul Beadle, an English born sculptor and artist and head of Newcastle Technical College School of Art from 1952 to 1957. They symbolise activities within the building. Sculpture within the building is by Lyndon Dadswell. Its restrained exterior features projecting ribs clad in glazed terracotta emerging from plain brick surrounds and a solid curved porch. Bas relief panels are the work of Paul Beadle, an English born sculptor and artist and head of Newcastle Technical College School of Art from 1952 to 1957.

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THE CITY OF NEWCASTLE has a sophisticated and rich architectural heritage that is the equal of any in Australia. It boasts fine commercial buildings, impressive blocks of flats, major religious institutions and an outstanding civic and cultural precinct, all situated in an exciting and invigorating townscape.
1978 was acquired by the Conservatorium, which eventually occupied it in 1981 after modifications to the design of the Public Works department were completed.

The adjoining Conservatorium building to the south was a Bicentennial project, designed in the Government Architect’s Office with John Carr as project architect. Newcastle architects Suters Busted Corner Clode were responsible for design development and documentation. It contains a world-class concert hall seating 500, plus studios, lecture theatre and practice facilities, wrapped in a mildly Post Modernist exterior.

The Conservatorium became associated with the University of Newcastle in 1990. Nesca House at 300 King Street was designed by the significant Newcastle in 1990.

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