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A History of New Zealand Home Architecture

We love New Zealand houses - we wouldn't live anywhere else. So we set ourselves the challenge of capturing the quintessence of Kiwi residential architecture over the past 200 years.

Brian Brake Home, designed by Ron Sang, 1977





This is one of our favourites. Believe it or not, it is one of New Zealand's most important modern buildings, according to the Heritage Assessment. Built for photographer Brian Brake in the bush of Titirangi, west of Auckland, it made the name of its young architect, Ron Sang. It also became a model for the Titirangi bush house and a brave new style of New Zealand architecture.

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Methodist Mission House, Hokianga, 1838



New Zealand's first architecturally designed houses were in the Georgian idiom of the classical revival style, of which this house is typical. With seven rooms, including a large parlour, it was built for the Reverend Nathaniel Turner. The house was relocated to Onehunga in the 1850s, but

was returned to Hokianga in the 1970s and restored by the Historic Places Trust (now Heritage New Zealand).

Bay Villa, early 1900s



The Bay Villa was one of New Zealand's most popular house designs of the early 1900s. Bay villas are 3-4 bedroom homes with at least one bay window at the front of the house and a front veranda decorated with ornate fretwork.

Transitional Villa, around 1910





From around 1910, the traditional villa started to incorporate bungalow features - a lower pitched roof and wider eaves with exposed rafters instead of the villa's boxed eaves. It wasn't quite a villa and it wasn't quite a bungalow, so architect Jeremy Ashford named it 'the transitional villa'.

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New Zealand Bungalow, 1920s



The word 'bungalow' comes from the Hindustani word 'bangla', but the origins of the bungalow in New Zealand are hotly disputed in architectural circles. Some claim that the style was inspired by bungalows from the west coast of the United States (California bungalows) while others argue that

it followed similar styles found in Britain and Australia. After World War One, the bungalow was the predominant style of house being built in New Zealand.

1930s a whole new movement emerged - art deco



In the 1920s, the ornate, extravagant style of Victorian/Edwardian villas had given way to the more casual bungalows, but in the 1930s a whole new movement emerged - art deco. The style became popular following the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes, from which 'art deco' takes its name. The form of a building should be determined by its function, and be closely related to the lives of the people in it, thought the art deco modernists. They had a field day in Napier after the 1931 earthquake, when they set to rebuilding the devastated CBD in the latest style, and Napier still celebrates this unique architecture with its annual Art Deco Festival.

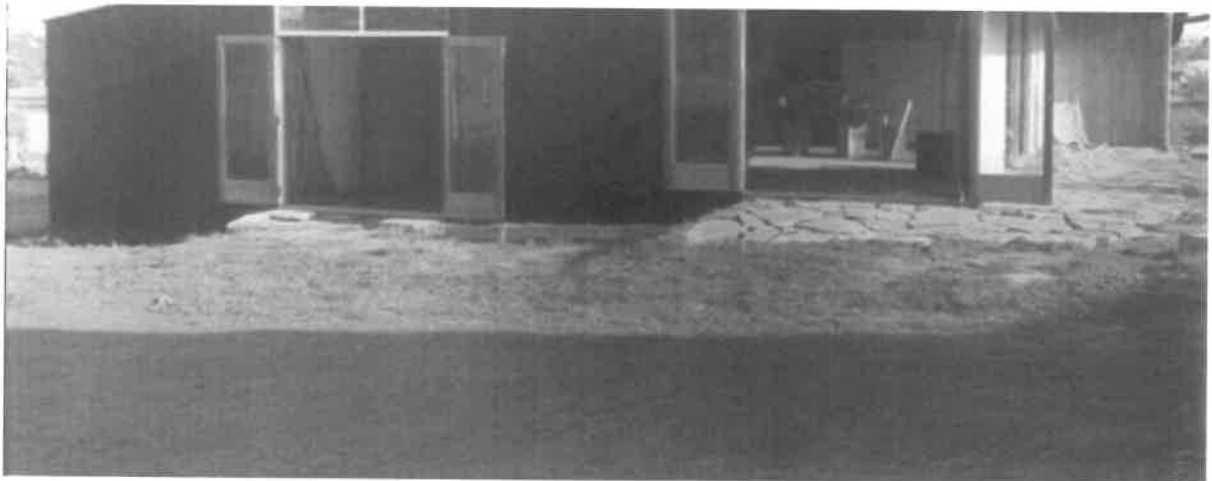
State Housing of the 1940's



The 1940s ushered in yet another new movement - state housing. These homes were the ultimate in functional living - boxy, built like brick you-know-whats, they accounted for more than one in four new homes built in New Zealand during the forties.

First House, The Group, 1950





When World War Two ended, there was a call from two influential groups of architects for a specifically New Zealand architecture. These groups, the Auckland-based one known simply as 'The Group' and the Wellington one called the Architectural Centre, were influenced by post-war modernism, traditional Maori buildings and the New Zealand lifestyle. They designed houses with warehouse-style low-pitch roofs, exposed timbers, open-plan interiors and new attention to indoor outdoor living.

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One of the doyens of The Group, Allan Wild (pictured left) says they were unaware at the time of the impact their style would have on New Zealand housing in the 1960s and 1970s - and even today.

Allan, who is a friend of my family, went on to become Head of the School of Architecture at the University of Auckland. He and Colin Wilson designed the plywood chairs pictured in one of The Group's houses below.





<http://the-tallyho.blogspot.co.nz/search/label/allan%20wild>

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Architect Ron Sang designed for Brian Brake



Here again is the house that Ron Sang designed for Brian Brake. Allan Wild explains that the house was designed by correspondence between Sang and Brake, and took six months with eighteen revisions. The result was a brilliant combination of spaces and places of exquisite quality and beauty, designed for the Waitakere bush, but including a distant outlook to the city.

Napier Street Townhouses, Auckland, 1982



These townhouses in Freemans Bay reintroduced terrace housing into New Zealand. Designed by Cook Hitchcock & Sargisson in a postmodern style and characterised by their alternating 'gelato' colours, the townhouses responded to a demand for higher-density housing in gentrifying central-city neighbourhoods.

Te Kaitaka Retreat, Lake Wanaka, 2010





You can see elements of earlier New Zealand architecture in this lakeside home. Its abstract, sculptural form was clad in timber and the interior featured timber, concrete and textured surfaces. One of the things we like about the house is that it accommodates its site rather than dominating it.

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No matter what age or style your home, we at Pzazz Building can be counted on to work sympathetically with the intent and design of the original architecture, enhancing the architect's vision. From heritage buildings, villas and bungalows to the latest contemporary styles, we have not only worked on them, we have worked - and this is the key distinction - with them.

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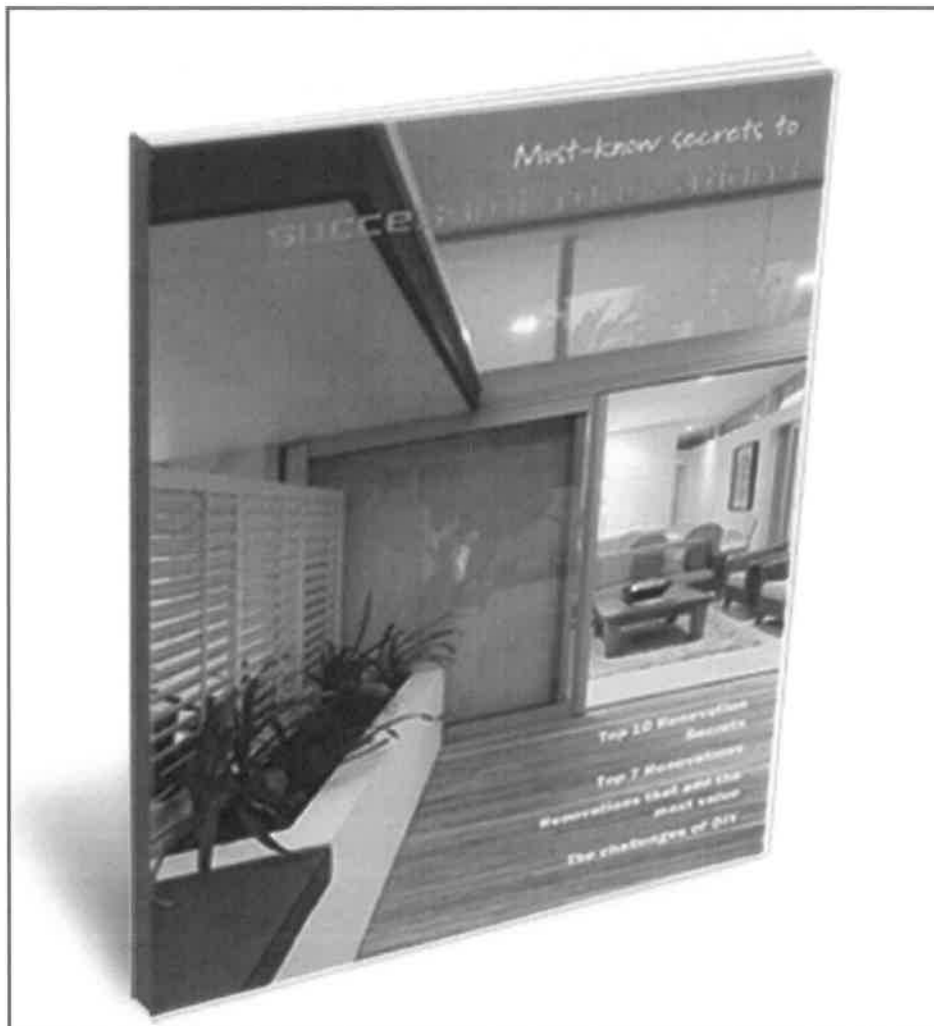
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