



asc architects

fifty years

MARCH 2006

HALF A CENTURY OF DESIGN

2006 sees ASC celebrating its 50th birthday. This special issue of the newsletter shows a few projects from the first 10 years, when the practice was known as Nyall Coleman, Gibson and Partners.

Nyall Coleman founded the practice in the early 1950s and was joined a few years later by Elmer Gibson. The major clients were the Catholic Church, Lucas Industries and the Government Life Insurance (now Tower Corporation). Nyall died unexpectedly in 1973, and Elmer took Maurice Andrews and Warren Wilcox into the partnership, which, at that time, included engineers and employed some 25 people.

John Hill and Graeme Scott joined as partners in 1981, when clients such as The National Bank and McDonald's were increasing in importance. Nevertheless, the early 1980s were difficult. Staff numbers decreased and the practice closed its engineering section.

The post-Muldoon era saw renewed growth in both the company and the industry. The firm was re-named Andrews Scott Hill Architects, following the retirement of Elmer and Warren. An increase in work for The National Bank after 1989 resulted in the opening of a Wellington office, and Neil Cotton joined the practice as a director. John Hill left the company in 1992 to pursue his own interests, and eight associates were appointed, two of whom – Brendan Rawson and John Sofo – became directors in the mid 1990s.

For the first 44 years, the practice operated out of the old brick terrace houses at 25 Symonds



Government Life Building,
99 Queen St, Auckland, 1965.
Sketch by Gordon Moller.

Catholic school, 1950s.





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Street. It then relocated to the more open environment and modern architecture of Site 3 in Newton. Since those early days, work has diversified into new areas, particularly schools for the Ministry of Education, and recreational facilities for many territorial authorities.

Maurice left the practice in 1998 and Brendan left in 2002 to form his own practice. Many of the associates and other architects from that time have gone on to do well in careers elsewhere.

The variety and volume of projects continues to grow, and membership of Designgroup since 1999 has allowed the practice access to greater resources without needing to further expand.

The current directors, Neil Cotton, John Sofo and Graeme Scott, with associates Trevor Millen, Biba Boban and Kevin Sanderson, look forward to producing ever-better buildings within a rewarding work environment. We'd like to thank the large group of loyal clients who have helped us to reach this significant anniversary.



Caltex House, Fanshawe St. 1962.



Private residence, Takapuna, early 1960s.



St Joseph's Church, Takapuna, 1963.