

MEDIA RELEASE November 24th 2009

The Oamaru Opera House is the joint winner of the 2009 David Cox Memorial Award.

The Oamaru Opera House has placed First equal in the David Cox Memorial Award. This award is administered by the Otago Branch of the NZ Historic Places Trust and recognises excellence in the restoration, conservation and continued use of historic buildings.

The award was announced last night in Dunedin at a public lecture hosted by H.P.T. and Engineering Heritage New Zealand. The award was presented by former Chair of English Heritage and interbationally renown heritage adviser Sir Neil Cossons.

Oamaru Opera House Comment:

“We are thrilled to receive this award which recognizes the architectural treatment of the restoration. This project was as much about restoring an old building as it was about investing in a community. Since opening the Oamaru Opera House has been consistently busy with a raft of community, arts and business events demonstrating a vibrant juxtaposition of vitality, heritage and functionality.”

Richard McWha Director, Oamaru Opera House

The Judges Comment:

“This comprehensive redevelopment of the Oamaru Opera House (NZ Historic Places Trust Category 2 registered building) has created a vibrant and significant community facility. The careful delineation of new elements within the building, and expression of changes to the building fabric, helps maintain the integrity of the original Opera House”

Background of award

The David Cox Memorial Award Fund was established in May 1984 by the Otago Regional Committee of the NZ Historic Places Trust to commemorate the work of the late David G Cox, consultant structural engineer to the Trust, whose fine restoration of historic buildings in Otago was cut short by his untimely death in 1983.

The Memorial Fund was created by the donations of the Cox family, the Otago Branch of the Institution of Professional Engineers NZ, the Dunedin Rotary Club, individual members of the NZ Institute of Architects, the Trust itself and its associate members and some private individuals.

Purpose of Award

The purpose of the Fund is to provide an annual award which will recognise and encourage the restoration and continued use of historic buildings in the Otago area. The award is administered by the Otago Branch Committee of the NZ Historic Places Trust and is made each year to the owner and/or consultant who has in the Trust's opinion -

- Completed the most meritorious and careful restoration of an historic building

in Otago, particularly where that restoration has involved structural work

or

- made the most effective and imaginative re-use of an historic building in Otago.

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