Making Space: A History of New Zealand Women in Architecture

The following is a transcript of a panel talk by Elizabeth Cox, Mary-Jane Duffy and Divya Purushotham, facilitated by Kate Jordan. It was recorded live at the National Library on 2 November 2022.

Transcript

Sarah Burgess: Kia ora, and welcome to the New Zealand History podcast channel, where you'll find talks on Aotearoa New Zealand history, culture and society. These talks are organised by Manatū Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage with the support of the Alexander Turnbull Library. They're recorded live either via Zoom or in person at Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa, the National Library of New Zealand.

Kate Jordan:

Pou Hihiri

Pou Rarama

Pou o te whakaaro

Pou o te tangata

Pou te aroha

Te pou e here nei i a tatou

Mauri ora kia tatou

Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e!

Nau mai, haere mai ki Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa.

Kia ora koutou, ko Kate Jordan tōku ingoa. He pou hītori ahau nō Manatū Taonga. Kia ora everyone, my name is Kate Jordan. I'm a historian at Manatū Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage.

I'm incredibly happy to introduce this wonderful new book and our panellists today. The book is, of course, Making Space: A history of New Zealand women in architecture. It explores the challenges and triumphs of women in the male-dominated sphere of architecture through a collection of nearly 50 essays. The book is really incredible because it is both wide-ranging and yet really detailed – it covers from 1840 all the way up to 2020 and yet still takes the time to look in detail at many women's careers.

Today on our panel we have the book's editor and author of many chapters, Elizabeth Cox, we have authors Mary-Jane Duffy and Divya Purushotham.

Elizabeth Cox is senior historian at Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage. She also has her own consultancy, specialising in architectural history, and social and women's history.

Mary-Jane Duffy is a tangata Tiriti writer based in Pōneke Wellington, working in the education sphere. Her master's thesis was based on the work of Margaret Staples Hamilton, later known as Margaret Munro, who we'll hear a great deal about.

Divya Purushotham is a registered architect and Associate Principal at Warren and Mahoney. She has led many large projects within the Wynyard Quarter Innovation Precinct and recently completed her term as co-chair of Architecture and Women NZ.

So please welcome, our lovely panel.

Now, Elizabeth was co-editor – was editor sorry, as we mentioned. Elizabeth, can you give us a quick introduction to the book, and how it came about?

Elizabeth Cox: Okay. So I'm not quite sure how long ago it was because I try not to remember how long it's taken me to write this book. I found a little biography of the very first registered architect, woman architect in New Zealand, Lucy Greenish. So Lucy was a Wellington architect. She came here about the turn of the century, and then her brother was an architect as well, and she managed to get involved in a Wellington architecture firm and registered as an architect in 1914 at the time when all of the first registrations were taking place in 1914. So, registration is something that will come up quite a lot, so I might as well explain it now. So as Divya explains it, it's kind of like being admitted to the bar, if you're a lawyer. So it allows you to call yourself an architect and use that word for yourself and 1914 was the first time that the qualifications of a whole series of people who were what we might call builders and engineers and contractors and what we would also call architects now were assessed to decide if they were suitably qualified. And Lucy Greenish was the only one – the only woman of those who became qualified. So I saw a small biography of her, and decided to stalk her life and that was what began this whole project.

So I very quickly found that Lucy had had an illegitimate baby, after having worked as an architect for some time. Her career in Wellington had been disrupted by the First World War, and she went to Queenstown to become a governess. And somehow while she was away she became pregnant in her mid thirties, which as a single woman must have been a terrible surprise. And she went to Dunedin – she went to Australia to have her baby. And while I was doing this research I discovered that this baby was still alive in her nineties, still living in Australia, because Lucy had had to leave her behind.

This is something a lot of New Zealand women did if they became pregnant when they were single. So I contacted this baby, now an old lady, her family, and her family said that she had

been told that her mother was a governess, and that no one knew who her father was, and so I was able to tell this family that actually Lucy was New Zealand's first registered architect.

So that kind of kicked off the whole project. The photos that you're seeing here actually were photographs that I found just before the book went to print. They had been stored away in a New South Wales library, and I only just got hold of them in time. So that's where I started my project, and then it got bigger and bigger from there as you'll hear.

Kate Jordan: So part of getting bigger with having other authors come in and offer their expertise. How did that come about? And how did you go about recruiting other authors?

Elizabeth Cox: Yeah. So being a historian I thought when I decided to make the project bigger that maybe I'd just come up to the Second World War or something nice and nice and contained like that. But I managed to get Massey University Press on board and they convinced me to come up to the present day and so that made the project a much bigger project but I think a much more satisfying project, because it meant that I've been able to assess the entire involvement of women from the very beginning right up until the present day, and there's not that many projects that assess any profession in that way. So yeah, I think it's been very successful. So the first impetus to get other people involved was that I didn't want to write about the Māori architects, so I convinced Deidre Brown to get involved and she wrote a wonderful chapter about Māori woman architects.

And then I got more and more people involved, including Mary-Jane, because Mary-Jane was really the only in-depth study that had been done of a woman architecture before I started. You know, of a real substantial length, and then more and more people got

involved. Cherie, who's here, agreed to write about the women who designed buildings in the 1840s well before Lucy. Yeah. And it just got bigger and bigger from there. So, there are 30 women, all of the authors are women. And there's academics and practicing architects like Divya and students and practitioners of other sorts.

Kate Jordan: That seems like a good way to move on to our next speaker and hear a little bit more about Margaret. Mary-Jane, can you tell us a little bit more about Margaret, her life as an architect?

Mary-Jane Duffy: Sure, kia ora koutou. Margaret, when I meet her, I was trying to figure it out before. I think she was in her late seventies. And she'd been retired for a little while, but was still very kind of engaged in architecture, the profession, and I believe was still even involved in some projects. And she – I guess I'd when I was starting at Canterbury University, doing art history, architectural history was part of the program, and so there was someone introduced me to this mysterious file in one of the filing cabinets which was Margaret's file.

Which turned out to be quite empty when I got to open it, but yeah, when I was casting around for subjects for my masters, yeah, I just I remembered the file and I'd also been really interested in kind of feminist subjects so it was quite a sort of all natural kind of pathway to Margaret, and then I guess, through Ian Lochhead, who was at Canterbury at that time, I probably got Margaret's contact details and phoned her up and went to meet her.

And she – that first meeting was kind of amazing because it was like she'd been waiting for someone to tell her story too, because she just like – I'd come totally unprepared without a notebook, or a tape recorder, or anything, and she just wanted to start talking straight

away. And so she did, and I had to kind of like, Yeah, say, okay, right? Well, we'll have to, you know taihoa, we have to save this kōrero up, for when I can actually be more properly prepared.

And so that was the beginning of like eight interviews with her over that year in 1991. And so I found out a lot about her. She was, through her mother, she was related to Cecil Wood, who was at that time one of Canterbury's most kind of you know, well-known architects he was quite famous for church architecture, and so he, a sort of throwaway comment to her one day when she was added probably about seven or eight, and she'd shown him one of her drawings, and he'd said, Oh, look! That's great, you know. I'm gonna keep a job for you in my office as an architect, and she apparently had to ask her mother what an architect was, but she held on to that and she obviously – it resonated with something in her, and so she held on to this dream of becoming, an architect, and eventually left school and in 1932 entered his office.

So he employed her, and then shed a whole lot of his staff, because it was the beginning of the Depression, and they sort of worked together for a number of years until he was able to recover from the Depression etc. And so she was in his office for about 14 years. She had a little breakaway during the war when she decided to go off to England and get training as lots of architects at the time did so she had six months in England in the office of Brian O'Rourke who was an ex-pat working over there, and then war broke out. I guess her family convinced her to come back, and she came back into Cecil's office and then, a bit later on she ended up leaving, I think they were busy in the office and interestingly the person that Cecil decided to employ as the help to, you know, help them with this massive workload they had, was a young, untrained person from Christ's College, Miles Warren, and so they,

Bob Munroe who was Margaret's colleague at that time, and Margaret were kind of furious at the decision that they were overloaded with work, and he, instead of you, know, employing someone who knew stuff and could help out with the workload he employed this, you know, schoolboy. And so they left, in a sort of well, I guess it was probably a, you know, a calculated risk. And Bob seat up his own practice, Margaret in the meanwhile got some other work, and then eventually Bob invited her to come into practice with him, even though she couldn't technically practice as an architect.

Please tell me to stop talking, [laughs] because I'll go on.

But anyway, just to cut a long story short, Bob ended up dying. They were in practice for about 14 years together. Bob ended up dying, and she was in the position of not being registered, and so what would she do? Well, she talked to some people that she knew, and they said, well, look, you've got all this, by this time, it was like 30 years' experience. So you'll be able to become registered. And so she did. She failed her, some exams in concrete and engineering which she was always felt she never got her head around. So the condition was that she would always have to consult an engineer when she was doing her designs, but got herself registered and yeah, and then worked for a number more years as 'Mrs' in small print. M. S. Monroe. So yes, that's the potted story of Margaret.

Elizabeth Cox: That was one of my favourite quotes that she said to you was that she deliberately put the 'Mrs' in small print. I like that. [laughs]

Kate Jordan: So she was quite unusual in that time of being in sole practice. How did she survive doing that?

Mary-Jane Duffy: Well, I think she really had her family. She must have had family support, you know, to support her dream, and she actually she was also really, she was really ambitious, because, even though one things I should have mentioned was that she started – she thought well, look I'm, you know, I'm in the Cecil's office, so I'm going to do what other – what the males in the office are going to do, and I'm going to go off and do the training such as it was at that time at the Christchurch College of Arts – I think that's what it was called – and go off and do the subjects that my colleagues in the office are doing. And so she went off and did the study that you could do it that time.

But I think Cecil – well, I know that Cecil was like well, you know, why are you doing that? You're a pretty young girl, you should be off having fun. So he really discouraged her from actually carrying on the rest of the process which would have seen her enrolled through the – I think it was called then the University of New Zealand which was beginning to – it was a transition period where they were beginning to take over the sort of education and registration.

I might be straying into slightly, wobbly territory here, but anyway, they were taking over the training of architects which was really if you couldn't be at the University of Auckland was really an apprenticeship style system and quite onerous. They had a, you know there was, yeah, there was a lot of study, a lot of things they had to do as these sort of apprentices, but yeah Cecil was going well, you know, you don't have to do that, Margaret, you know you're find here. And so he really discouraged that, but she none the least, you know, carried on, got involved with an atelier, which was the students set up to help them with these studies, and won prizes. So yeah, she was. She was ambitious, and I think, with

her family support – her first architectural project was her family's house in Papanui. So yeah, I think family support was the thing that got her through.

And then later, being married, she later married Bob Munroe, and so was able to practice so yeah, had those kind of supports.

Kate Jordan: Thank you. And, as we said earlier, this book comes all the way up to 2020, which is relatively unusual for a history. But it was important to include the voices of young architects currently in the profession and Divya, you took on the challenge of writing about your work and that of your peers – can tell us a little bit about the process of writing your chapter and what you learned while you're doing it?

Divya Purushotham: Yeah, kia ora, thank you. I guess I'm surrounded in a, you know, in the company of people who are very adept at writing about people in history, and I don't come from their background. So Elizabeth you approached me to write this chapter and it was a very intimidating task because the burden of telling other people's stories, especially when they're, you know, practicing and quite active, is a huge responsibility to bear. So, I was very hesitant, but, on the other hand, what it did do was connect me to a network of people that I – were also going on similar journeys as I was, and it there would be no other opportunity really for me to meet with them, this as nationwide I was speaking to Jane Rooney in Christchurch, and you know a lot of the staff in Studio Pacific in Wellington, likewise some of my colleagues in Auckland, so kind of stretch me across there and there was an incredible consistency that I found in all of their stories.

The thing to note about what we're – the background that I'm writing about is women in larger scale, commercial practices. And so the difference there is that they typically end up

having quite a long gestational period of, say, two years of design and two years of construction. So the timeline of commitment to that process in that project and then the tenacity you need goes from, you know, like a six-month program which might be typical for a house to like a four-year thing, and in the context where the role of either a primary caregiver ends up typically being the woman, historically, has meant that that four-year period has always been quite hard, to commits to or opportunities are – strategic opportunities are missed as a result. So what happened over time when you get to senior leadership positions is that we don't have that many visible role models or people that have gone through the trajectory of that process and the thing about registration which you've spoken about a few times now is that it brings with it a level of independence that I think typically ends up being out of your control. So in a four-year-long process, if your client's, kind of, funding fall through, or your tenants don't end up, that has a personal impact on your journey to registration which can be quite complex in a, when you're trying to navigate commitments in your life.

So that kind of ended up being a version of what I spoke to, and also the kind of incredible achievements that these women have are done. What I did find through talking to them was the immense amount of collegiality that they all had, because it always takes a team to build something like this together, and ironically, quite a few women on that I spoke to were very hesitant to be named to be responsible for one of these projects because I can speak from that myself like you kind of end up working as a part of a team, and then to be named as the person representing that project is a version of imposter syndrome in a version of trying to like 'it's not actually me, it's actually a whole team of people' which we've always

acknowledged. But that is often exactly why we choose to focus on visibility and actually making those stories visible.

Because in your instance there Margaret would have been, you know, shattered or co authoring projects, but you know, I think some of the words was her husband was definitely the boss of the – of the practice, and so she was kind of secondary, but the contributions often remain invisible as a result of it. So I don't know if that answers your question, but that's a preamble to what I've been writing about.

Kate Jordan: Yeah, and it leads to another question. You talk about visibility. During your studies, did you learn about a lot of the women who feature in this book, about historic female artists?

Divya Purushotham: Yeah, I guess the short answer is, no, none that I can kind of recall, and I never remember that being an issue at the time, because I think it, um, in university your gender parity in architecture school is 50/50. So you've got 50% women, I mean, you don't really realise it, so for reasons like I was talking about earlier when you get to kind of your early to mid career and life starts to take over. That's when you really see the skew of like woman to men. And so at the time that you're looking for role models is the moment that you realise there are so few of them. So, even when trying to write a list of them, there are plenty of people that I haven't written about, but also, you know there aren't that many women either practicing in large practices at the moment. It's rapidly changing, which is really exciting, but at a senior leadership level we're still, we have a way to go.

Kate Jordan: Still got to keep moving. Keep changing. So, looking back at visibility, Elizabeth, you covered a lot of the early chapters. Was it easy finding those early women architects, or was it a lot of hard work?

Elizabeth Cox: So, after I focused on Lucy, I kind of went back in time. So Lucy, as I said, was the first registered architect, but she wasn't actually the first qualified New Zealand architect, woman architect, and this is the first who's Kate Beath. So Kate was Kate Shepherd's niece. And she lived in Christchurch, and she was part of that whole elite of cultural, well-educated women. And so Kate had been written about a little by Ann Calhoun, who's an art historian. But Kate's a good example of the records, and what happens if you don't look after them. So unfortunately some of the records have been kept by a fabulous family member in Waikanae and I managed to get hold of some of those images, but some of the images have been stored away by a different family member, and it meant I couldn't get hold of them. So Anne was telling me that she'd seen particular plans by this architect, and I still haven't managed to get hold of them. And so in the book I had to speculate about some of the houses that she may have designed, because I never did get – managed to get hold of her house plans.

So whenever I work on these older women every time I looked at some architectural plans, I was desperate to see some initials on the bottom of a plan, that showed that it was her that had designed it within the larger firm but actually it was incredibly difficult, and that was very rare, to find.

What I did find amongst all my research is that actually there were a lot of women working as draftswoman and as architects within firms that we actually know really well. So a good example of that was Florence Field. I found Florence from this amazing article, which is

called ‘A kitchen designed by a woman’, or planned by a woman, which was in a lady's journal in 1923. So you can imagine how excited I was to find this, and it's the description is all about the science of cooking and the science of cleaning, and how carefully she had studied where your feet need to go when you're cooking and where your knees go when you're doing a particular task and how to clean things, and she had done a real time and motion study basically about how to do the best of cleaning.

And then she had designed her house. And so for many years this article was the only thing that I found. And then somehow, after many, many hours, spent looking, hiding in plain sight on the National Library digital catalogue was the house, and I could tell from the plans that were in the article that this is the house that she designed. So it's sitting on a Nelson on the – up above that main road that comes into Nelson from the airport, and so you can see how beautiful it is.

And I studied and studied the map of Nelson on Google Maps and could not find this house, and I thought it must have been pulled down. And then one time I was talking to Ian Bowman, who's a conservation architect from Nelson, and I described it again, and sent him the photo, and said and he said, Oh, I used to babysit in that house. [laughs] And it's right and it's right next door to me, I can see it out my window! And it's just yeah. It was a pretty special day when that happened, and it just so happens that the people who own this house, their granddaughter, is training to be an architect in Wellington and she contacted me all sorts of circuitous roots and she sent me lots of beautiful photos of it. So this is an example of the success of the sort of multifaceted research that you can do using family history and Google maps and studying all sorts of things like that.

Kate Jordan: And ringing up Ian Bowman.

[laughter]

Kate Jordan: So Christchurch features quite heavily in the book, both the rebuild which is a really lovely chapter, but also the earlier architects. There appears to be quite a few female architects in Christchurch. Mary-Jane, do you know why that might have been?

Mary-Jane Duffy: Maybe because of the Canterbury College of Arts, I'm not sure. I mean it's interesting that Margaret, was at Rangi Ruru school, and when she, you know, told them that she wanted to be an architect, they sort of cobbled together something pretty useless, but they were supportive of the idea that she wanted to be an architect. They didn't poo poo it. And you know they yeah. So maybe that? Yeah, I mean Rangi Ruru is a pretty fancy school, so you obviously are of a, you know, you're middle class, if you're going to be there. So I don't know Elizabeth, do you have any thoughts on why Christchurch features?

Elizabeth Cox: Yeah, I think it's that cultural sort of elite support, I guess. There were actually some really significant women who went overseas in the 1930s from Christchurch, and one of them became – trained up was one of the very first women to ever train at the Architectural Association in London. And she helped design the Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford in the UK.

So yeah, there are a whole set of women. Maybe it's that sort of, if you see one and you can support another. Cecil Wood actually employed three different women at different times. So, yeah.

Kate Jordan: So touching on 'you can't be what you can't see'. Divya, the book has tried to talk about diversity in a wider sense than just gender. Can you tell us a bit more about that, and how you tackled it, within in your chapter.

Divya Purushotham:

Yeah. So I guess in my time at Architecture Women, which is a nonprofit organization.

They advocate for visibility, and inclusiveness of, you know, starting with gender as a platform, but actually wanting to expand a little bit more. It's just gender's the easiest thing to start with, because it often receives a reaction.

But you know there's kind of cultural and social inclusivity that we still need to do in 2022, given our climate emergency. I think there are many ways of kind of tapping into say indigenous knowledge to actually re-engage in how we're looking at designing, what we look forward to.

Diversity, really, like gender is a subset of it, and this book is a really important milestone to mark that, because to that point of you know I didn't necessarily learn any, have any educational input historically as to who the woman architects were, having a record of this now, while this, you know, there's a third of this that's very contemporary, going forward and actually records quite a significant history to then leverage from, moving forwards. So you know I mentioned there's a really small subset of woman working in larger practices, but it gets even smaller when you start looking at indigenous architects and Pacific – Māori and Pacifica women and that representation is growing but at a really incredibly slow rate. But we are optimistic.

But this yeah, I feel like I'm ending everything with like there's work to be done. But it's an exciting kind of process where –

Kate Jordan: It's important to remember you know we haven't won yet. We've got to keep going forward. So we will be taking questions from the audience, but I feel like I won't spring it on you right away. So I'll ask Elizabeth one question while you guys can think about any questions you might like to ask.

So we've spoken a little bit about various oral history interviews. Elizabeth was that a large part of the research and how did you weave that into the project?

Elizabeth Cox: Yes, I interviewed 27 women for this project which is a pretty substantial time suck, you know it really does eat up a lot of time. Quite a lot of those interviews were done during Covid, so I had women trapped in their homes who had nothing better to do than to talk to me, or actually that's not true because they were trying to run the practices and save their businesses, at the same time, and it was great because I did get to talk to them about Covid, and because it was – architects are often like the canary in the coal mine, they often, if an economy, is struggling, then architects often do badly first, and so there was a lot of very, very stressful times for architects out there, particularly women, running sole practices or small businesses.

So I used them liberally, actually those interviews to really understand how women run their own businesses because I wanted it to be not just, they built this, and they built that, but I wanted to make it about how women run a business as well as being parents, and all those sort of things. Yeah. So. And then I also, with people's permission, provided them to other authors where I could. So it was a really valuable part of the process.

Kate Jordan: And you used – Divya, you used one of those interviews in your chapter as well. How did you find that, as just part of your process?

Divya Purushotham: Pretty good. I feel like I was spying on their lives like watching another person's conversation, but I used them for two actually, so Elisapeta Heta and Katherine Skipper, who have been represented more than once in this book, and they have great stories to tell.

So. It was really valuable having that record, and I think actually, Elizabeth, I think you somehow convinced me to do one too. But it was – she just has this meaningful way of extracting your soul onto paper so very thankful for those kind of opportunities to have those stories on record. And actually really valuable resource going forward when we are able to extract information from them.

Kate Jordan: Thanks. I think I've given everyone a bit of time to think so, does anyone have any questions for our speakers today?

Audience member one: I was going to ask about Lillian Chrystall. Did you interview her, I don't know if she's still alive.

Elizabeth Cox: Yes, so Lillian was written about by Lynda Simmmons, who's one of the authors that helped me with the book, and Lillian died quite recently. Just this year, I think it was. And so she was an Auckland architect who trained just after the Second World War, and was really important in the Auckland scene of the sort of the post-war attempt to make the world a better place. And she was the daughter of the chap who set up the Farmers empire. So she came from quite a wealthy background, but she went off to Paris and London, and studied and worked over there and then came back to Auckland.

And she said she came down with a thump back to New Zealand life. But she set up her own practice on her own and then married. She got a student and to help her with her practice, and they named ended up marrying and working together.

But luckily we managed to show the draft of the chapter to Lilian before she died, so that was really lovely, and her family were really helpful in providing images for the book as well. So yeah, she was great.

Audience member 2: That's really interesting. Sounds like a great book, and intrigued by some of the slides that have been shown with no explanation of who built the buildings and stuff at particularly in Divya's section.

Divya Purushotham: Yeah, no. We actually had a talk a conversation about this. I was like people are just going to see images of big buildings. These are represented in the chapters by specific women that have been contributing to these projects. So they've either been leading it as project architects, or I have spoken to their experience on this project forming quite a lot of their career.

And so there's, you know, this is specifically by Jasmax, who has spoken about by Evelyn Asten about the responsibility of building a project that's representing New Zealand to the wider practice. So I mean there's a story, behind each one of these – Nelson airport and Catherine O'Hare on the first kind of base isolated, actually I don't know if it was the first, but it was quite a highly complex project for her to be navigating in the Wellington space.

And this is Wellington airport, which you guys will know quite well. That project architecture was Katherine Skipper at Warren and Mahoney as well. So the explanations are in the chapter, but yeah, they are kind of snapshots of their career, to say the least.

Cherie Jacobson: Question for Divya. I just wondered as an architect and as part of Architect Plus Women. What's the initial reaction been to the book so far in terms of like, oh, yeah, we knew all this, and now it's on paper which is great or people going woah, we had no idea about some of this history, or also what some of our colleagues have been doing. Just kind of yeah contemporary response to the book.

Divya Purushotham: Yeah. So I think Architecture Women have been a long time kind of supporter of this project. I think I remember Elizabeth out to get your story out of Lucy, maybe in 2000? I can't remember, pre-pandemic different time, but so some of the – we've kind of known the content of the books coming out.

But actually Linda Simmons, who's our co-founder and co-chair – ex-co-chair, who seems, in my world like she's a mentor of mine, but also feels seems that she knows everything about everyone but I saw her walking around with this book the other day, and she's just kind of flipping through the pages and she's just like there's so much in here that I just had no idea was happening. So there's no way that we ever knew, I think, we're quite contemporary in how we're approaching what the current day kind of context is. But what these guys have put together is a wealth of knowledge that extends far beyond. Was it 1840 that it starts? It's just never really been talked about before. So that's a really exciting thing. So all new stuff for us

Joan McCracken: I have a question from online, if that's alright. So you've done a lot of valuable research, can it possibly now be stored in one location, such as the Turnbull Library?

[laughter]

Elizabeth Cox: Are you sure you didn't write that question yourself, Joan? [laughs]

All of my old history interviewees were asked whether they would be happy for me to lodge those interviews in the Turnbull, and I will go back and have another conversation with them, and re-check all of that but I am hoping that that will be part of what I do.

And my research notes I guess they're pretty messy, but I certainly could try. Yeah, but because I have benefited from the research of other people. I really understand the value of storing research notes. I often come across collections of notes by historians that you get to plunder again, so I find that really useful.

Aside from Mary-Jane's big project in '93, there was a big project by a collection of women architects done in 1993 looking for their own precedence, and they have kept all that material, and I used that a lot as well, so it would be really great to collect it altogether.

Audience member: I was just wondering whether some of the authors had found in their research that there was much of a connection between some of the women architects and other people working in architectural women working in architectural firms. I've kind of alluded to the influence of Rangi Ruru school, and perhaps in the Christchurch milieu early on. But just did that come up very much, or was it very much more like the individual? You know, that's what people found, and it was hard to find connections between different women across the architectural scene.

Mary-Jane Duffy: Yeah, I definitely think that Margaret was yeah, working in isolation. Yeah, I don't know that she didn't – I don't recall here talking about encountering other women

architects. So yeah, but that, but there are photos in the book of you know, groups of women at conferences and things, so I think historically that you know there might have been other opportunities for women to meet each other. But yeah no, Margaret definitely had a sense of working in isolation. You know gender isolation.

Elizabeth Cox: One quite good venue of employment for women was the Ministry for Works, Ministry of Works and the Public Works Department before that, and so they actually as architects and as draughtswomen, and so they saw a few more women than perhaps women working individually in practices. I think you know that' 93 project that I mentioned even as late as that, in '93 the whole point of that was to attempt to create a sense of precedent and having peers, because even that late they were still desperate to find that connection yeah, and Architecture Plus Women's existed for about 10 years now hasn't it? So even that you know that's doing the same thing of trying to connect people to together. And I do think it makes a big difference.

Divya Purushotham: Yeah, just finding that network. This is not the type of connection that you were asking about, but we're just found yesterday that Jane Rooney, who's a woman I've written about worked on an extension on Margaret Monroe's original building, which is the St Andrews Chapel, which is a nice kind of roundabout circle as well.

So maybe through , so over some time.

Elizabeth Cox: There's another lovely connection circle which is the buildings at Scott Base, so the very first buildings that New Zealand built at Scott Base, the draftswoman on that project, as the draughtsperson on that was a woman who I managed to talk to. She now, still lives in Tauranga, and then the second iteration of that was designed by a woman

architect, who still lives in Hamilton. And then now, of course, Scott Base is going through a great big project and there's women architects on that as well. So that's a really nice connection.

Divya Purushotham: Just on that sorry, just one last plug for the Architecture Women database. It's a really valuable resource, so if you or anyone here will you know any architects that are looking for a network – highly encouraged them to sign up to their database or look for resources on there because there are many people willing to mentor, or looking for mentors, it's a really useful tool.

Audience member: Oh, hi! I was just wondering regarding Margaret Hamilton's and the photographs of the buildings that she designed. Are the houses in Christchurch, are they all still standing were the historic photographs or current photographs that they survive some of them? Most of them hopefully survived the earthquake?

Mary-Jane Duffy: Good question about the earthquake. Cherie was our woman on the ground doing a lot of that research, weren't you? But you took a lot of contemporary photos. I think most of the houses are still standing, that's my understanding.

Kate Jordan: Cherie, did you want to comment on that further? Just for background, Cherie is another author from the book.

Cherie Jacobson: Yeah. So all the houses that they were photos of Margaret's work are still standing, and those photos were taken about two years ago on an annoyingly grey cloudy day but yeah. And I had the privilege of meeting the owners of all of them, but particularly one lovely man who lived in what I think of as the chocolate box house, because it looks like

a beautiful house on an old-fashioned chocolate box. He told me that he had grown up in that area, and he used to drive past the house all the time and just loved it.

And then, as an adult, it went up for sale, and he was able to buy it and live in it, and he just, he loves that house and he had the old plans up in the garage roof in a plastic bag which in an archival sense was like oh, but they're beautiful hand-coloured plans that Margaret did. And he and his wife met Margaret before she died, and talked to her about her work, and that was really special.

So I imagine lots of people who've contributed to the book have had that experience ,really special experiences, because buildings are about people, and I think yeah, for me that was really amazing.

Kate Jordan: Thank you Cherie. So now I'd like to thank our speakers, and like to join invite you to. Oh, my gosh, it's been long day! I'd like to thank our speakers. I'd like you to, too, so let's have a round of applause for them.

So we'll close with our karakia.

Te Whakaaetanga e

Te Whakaaetanga e

Tēnei te kaupapa ka ea

Tēnei te wānanga ka ea

Te mauri o te kaupapa ka whakamoe

Te mauri o te wānanga ka whakamoe

Koa ki runga, koa ki raro

Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e!

Thank you everyone

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