

## Upgrade of Toilet Facilities at Old Government House

February 2010

When completed in 1856 to serve as the residence for Governor Thomas Gore Browne Old Government House was the largest timber mansion in the country. Today Old Government House and its surrounding precinct is the highest ranking historic place in Auckland.



The conservation exercise that recently completed at Old Government House has seen the upgrade of the principal ground floor toilet facilities, which are housed in an early addition to the original 1856 construction. This work is part of a continuum of works' projects managed by the University of Auckland.

In 2009 the University of Auckland approached Archifact with a brief to reconfigure and refurbish the existing toilet facilities to better fulfil the requirements of the respective users. The reconfiguration includes switching over the men and women's toilet spaces, which also provided an opportunity to carry out structural upgrade to the original totara foundation piles and floor structure.

**Above:** Upgraded toilet with chequered floor and polished granite bench and pelmet light. (Source: Archifact Ltd., 2010)

The foundation work was carried out in association with an archaeological investigation where work required in-ground excavation. This work led to the discovery of some interesting archaeological finds including early drainage, sealed paths and 'Capstan Navy Cut Cigarettes' packaging likely dating back to the use of Old Government House during the Second World War.

Existing infrastructural cabling was reconfigured at the same time in order to simplify and enhance the interior space.



**Above:** 'Capstan Navy Cut Cigarettes' packaging found in the toilet block subfloor. (Source: Archifact Ltd., 2010)