David Asher's Store | Masonic Hotel G.H. Whitcombe Proprietor | John Maxwell Fancy Bread & Biscuit Baker | Medical | H.C. Hoyte Chemist & Druggist | The Strand Auction Room R.C. Jordan | Brennan & Smith Drapers Auctioneers etc. | Government Building at rear | Hamilton Street | Bay of Plenty Times - Propr G.V. Stewart | Tauranga Hotel Alex Cook Proprietor

The Strand, Tauranga - 1876
Prepared: David de la Hyde
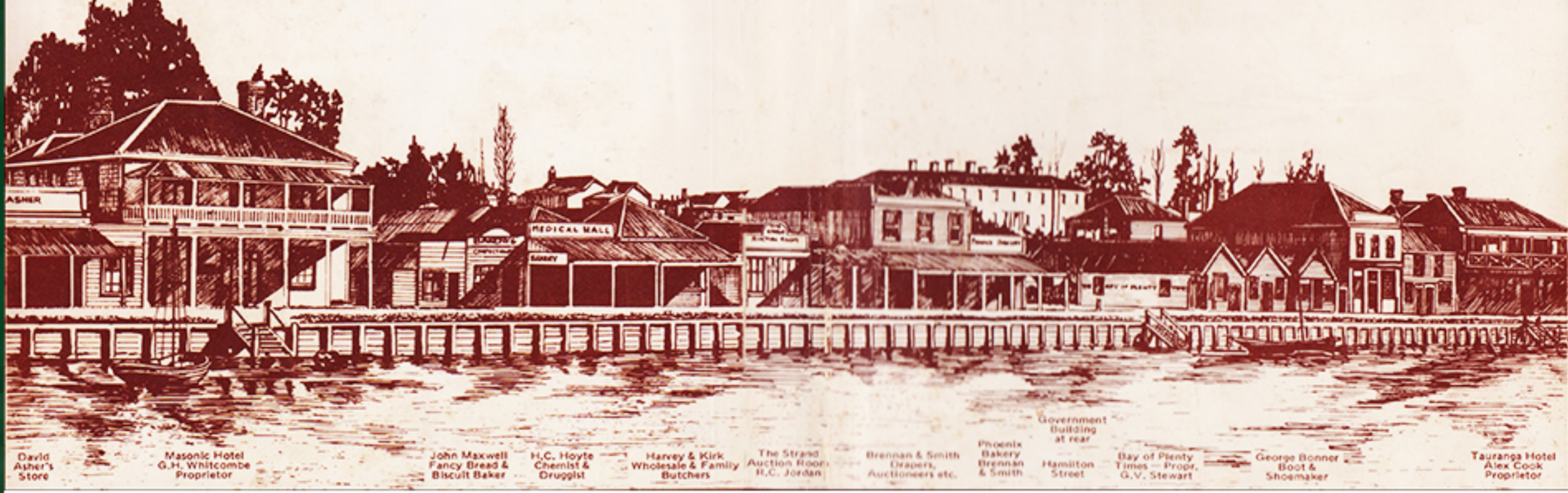


Cover Illustration 0n "Tauranga 1882 - 1982"

## RECORDING TAURANGA HISTORIC BUILDINGS



The image at the top of the page is a photo of a poor quality image (early days of photography) that was used as the basis of the drawing by Anne Hyde that appears on the front cover of the "Tauranga 1882 to 1982" Centenary Book.

In the top photo I copied the location text, that was in the image below, derived from the Centennial Book published in 1982.

To fit the book cover, a section of David Asher's Store in the original drawing is missing.

After I joined the Tauranga Electric Power Board as an Electrical Engineer towards the end of 1972 both Anne Hyde and myself became interested in recording old buildings in the general Tauranga district.

This interest was stimulated by a few books becoming available of sketches of colonial buildings in particular districts.

Based on my knowledge of producing printed circuit boards at work, and my general experience as an amateur photographer, I decided that a practicable approach would be:

1. Take photos of suitable buildings.

2. Use my Durst M300 enlarger to make approximately 16"x20" prints or composite prints that could be traced over. The enlarger's head could be moved sideways so a degree of perspective correction could be made.

The Italian firm Durst ended production of their enlargers in late 2006 due to a drop in sales, probably due to growth of minilabs and later digital imaging.

3. Make up a drawing board that could rest on the arms of a lounge chair on which the photo or composite photo could be mounted. Then an A3 tracing paper overlay was placed on the photo images.

4. As Anne had a lot of experience utilising graphic designs for items to sell at craft markets (mainly poker work on wood or leather), she then drew on the tracing paper with technical drawing pens for a final design, using the photo/photos as the structural backbone design. She did it very well.

5. The tracing paper was then overlaid in the darkroom/laundry on to a lithographic sheet film and a contact negative produced after development. Large 16"x20" developing dishes were used.

6. After fixing, washing and drying, the contact negative could next be placed on sheets of photographic paper, and a print produced by the usual photo print processing methods.

Twenty three different prints were produced using the above methods, and a publisher was approached to see they could be published. However the perspective publisher wanted about double the number of images over a wider area. At that stage we were both rather tired of the work involved and called it quits.
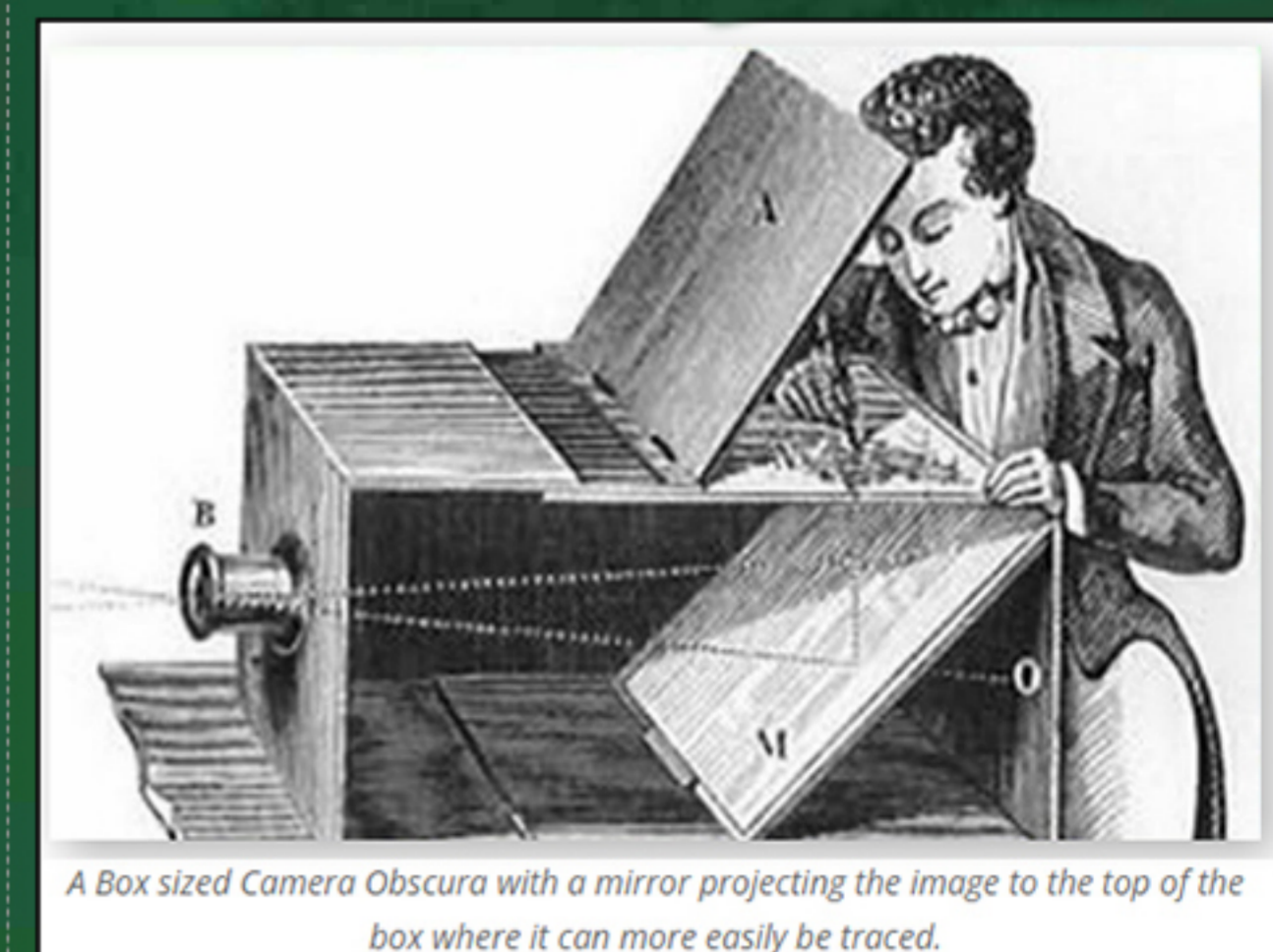


*A Box sized Camera Obscura, with a mirror projecting the image to the top of the box where it can more easily be traced.*

Contemporary visual artists who have explicitly used camera obscura in their artworks include James Turrell Abelardo Morell, Minnie Weisz, Robert Calafiore, Vera Lutter, Marja Pirila, and Shi Guorui.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camera_obscura
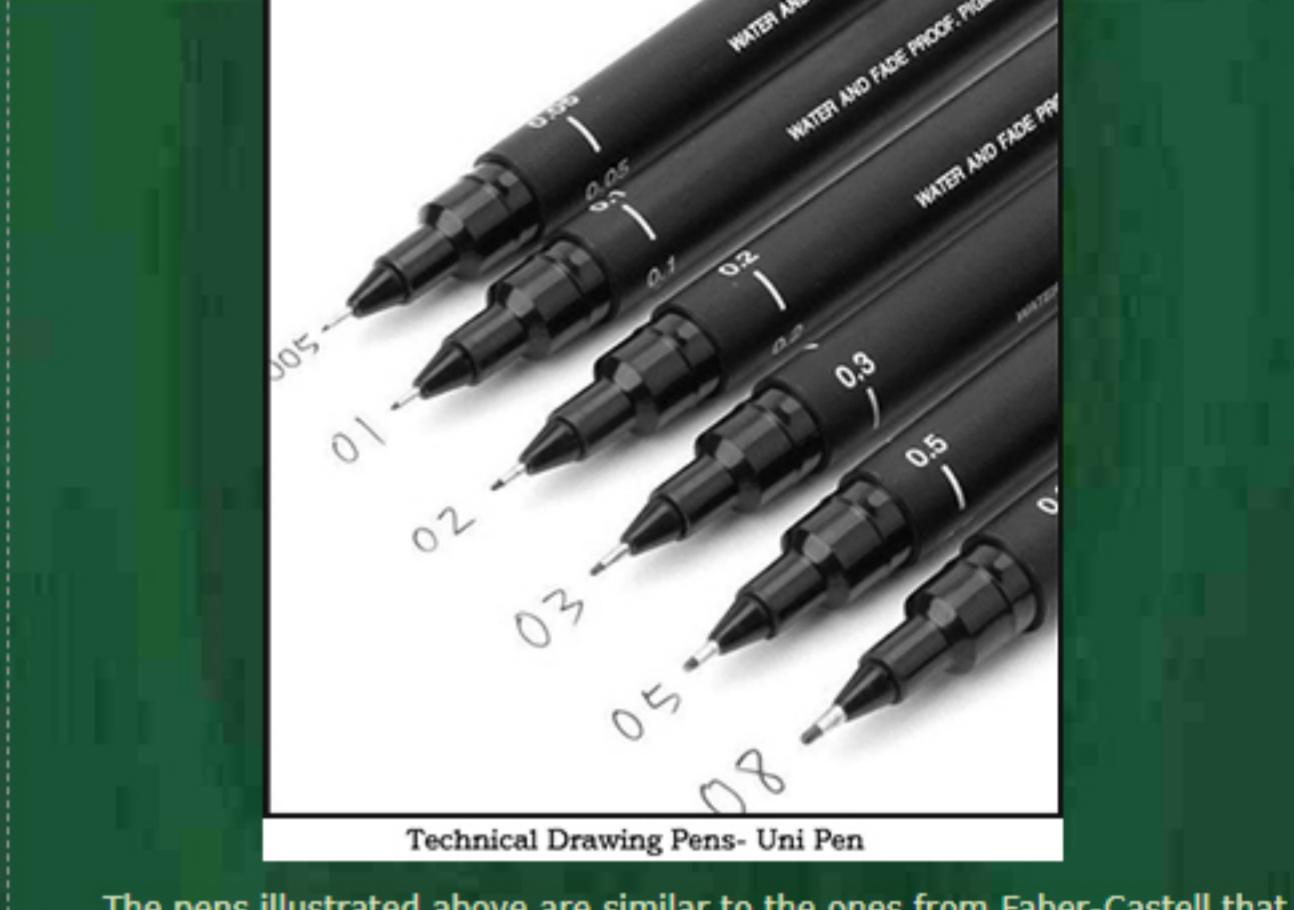


Technical Drawing Pens- Uni Pen

The pens illustrated above are similar to the ones from Faber-Castell that were actually used. These pens gave sufficient contrast for making lithographic negatives.

The methods used of producing prints described on the left, primarily came about because software packages such a Photoshop, were not available until after about 1987.

## "USING A CAMERA OBSCURA - IS IT ART?"

I did not know how to answer this so I asked the online robot chatGPT. I like its conclusion in italics below. Though I am not sure how you use a camera obscura for ill - throw it at someone?

" Camera obscura is an optical device that has been used for centuries by artists and scientists alike to project an image onto a surface. It is essentially a dark chamber or box with a small hole or aperture on one side, which allows light to enter and project an inverted image onto the opposite wall or surface. The camera obscura was initially used by scientists to study the properties of light, but it was eventually adopted by artists as a tool for creating realistic depictions of the world around them.

The question of whether using a camera obscura constitutes art is a complex one that has been debated by scholars and artists for centuries. On one hand, some argue that the camera obscura is simply a tool or instrument, and that the real artistry comes from the artist's ability to use it creatively to produce unique and original works. They argue that the camera obscura is no different from other tools and technologies that artists use, such as paintbrushes, cameras, or computers, and that the real measure of artistic merit lies in the artist's ability to use these tools to create something that is aesthetically pleasing, emotionally resonant, or intellectually stimulating.

On the other hand, some argue that the camera obscura is more than just a tool, and that its use can be seen as a form of cheating or deception. They argue that the camera obscura produces images that are too realistic and accurate, and that this detracts from the artist's ability to convey their own personal vision or style. They also argue that the camera obscura removes the artist from the creative process, making them more of a technician or craftsman than an artist.

While these arguments have some validity, it is ultimately up to individual artists to decide whether using a camera obscura is a legitimate form of art or not. Some artists may choose to use the camera obscura as a way of capturing the world around them in a highly realistic way, while others may use it as a starting point for more creative and imaginative works. Ultimately, the value of any work of art lies in its ability to move, inspire, and provoke thought in its audience, and whether it was produced using a camera obscura or any other tool is secondary to this goal.

*In conclusion, using a camera obscura can be a legitimate form of art, but it ultimately depends on how the artist uses this tool to express their creative vision. Like any other tool or technology, the camera obscura can be used for good or for ill, and it is up to artists to decide how they want to use it. Whether or not the use of a camera obscura is seen as a form of cheating or deception is ultimately a matter of personal opinion, but it is important to remember that the true value of any work of art lies in its ability to move and inspire its audience, regardless of how it was created."*

Author - chatGPT - Sunday 5th March 2023.

For Download: This web page : "Recording Tauranga Historic Houses"
Recording Tauranga Historic Houses - PDF document (4 Mb)

## DRAWINGS OR PHOTOS?

At the time of creating the prints they were regarded as a product for sale, and little consideration was given to their possible artistic merits.

Generally speaking people tend to purchase drawings rather than photos.

However as an amateur photographer I am interested in this particular case - which is more appealing - the drawings or the photos.

"Tauranga Primary School" the drawing clearly wins with its natural simplicity. There were about three photos making up the composite base because the front of the building was partly obscured by trees. Old photos of the school that I have seen have not been of a high quality.



With the Katikati homestead depicted below, I prefer the photo - it is difficult with technical drawing pens to give tonal shadings.
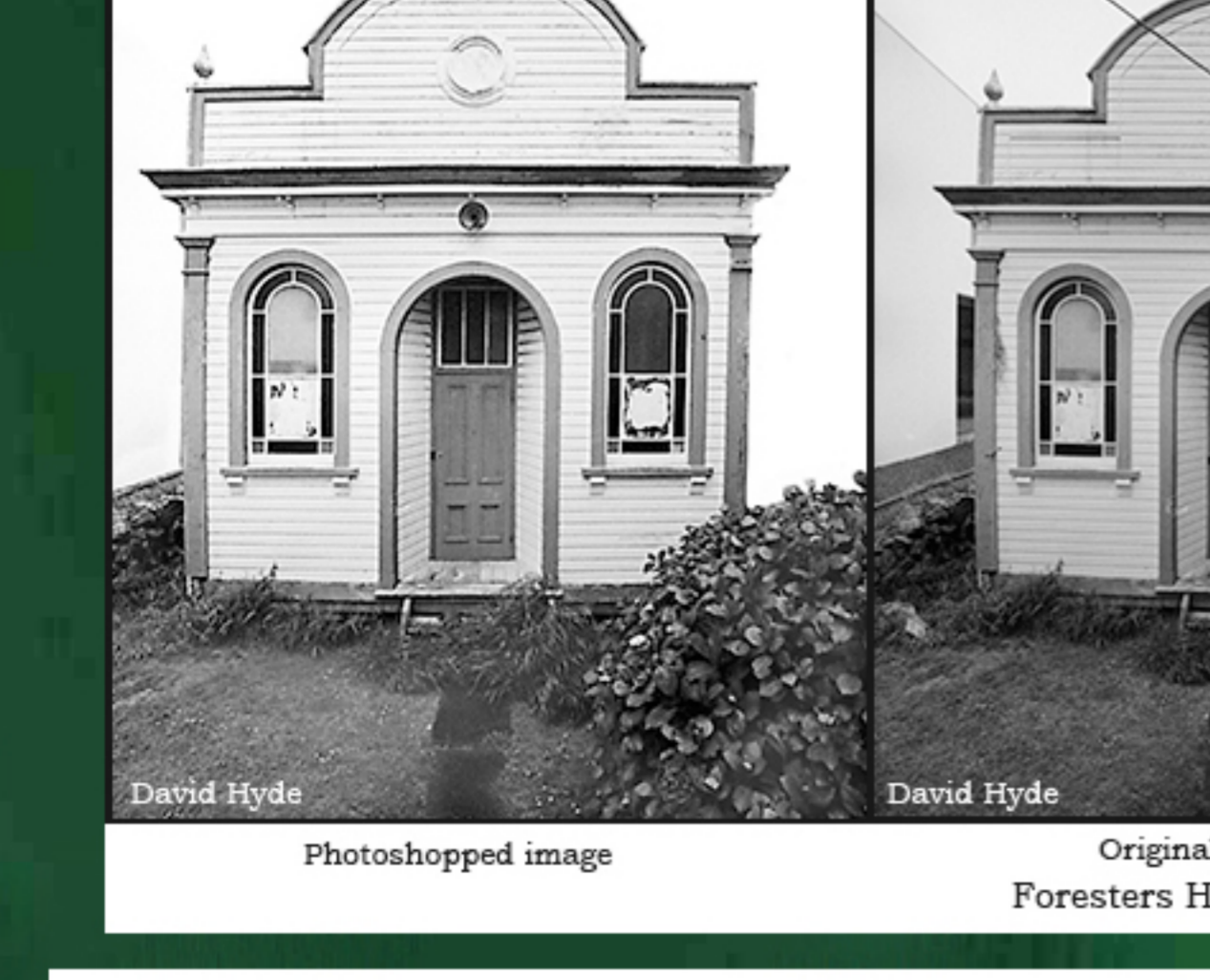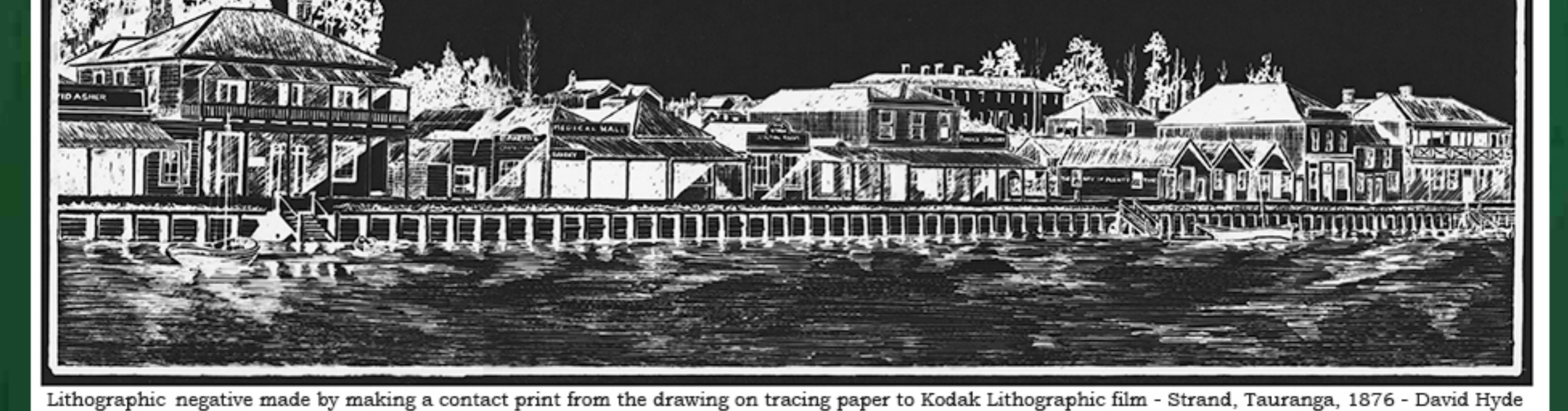




David Hyde



David Hyde

The reader can decide for themselves which image they prefer.



David Hyde | David Hyde | 
Photoshopped image | Original photo | Drawing - Anne Hyde
Foresters Hall - Tauranga



Lithographic negative made by making a contact print from the drawing on tracing paper to Kodak Lithographic film - Strand, Tauranga, 1876 - David Hyde

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