

ARCHITECTURE IN MY HOMETOWN

In this essay, I will discuss two buildings in my hometown Swansea. The First building at hand is the Palace theatre, constructed in 1888 by Bucknall & Jennings (Anon., n.d.). The next building I'm looking at is the Morgan's Hotel, completed in 1902 and designed by Edwin Seward (Anon., n.d.). One is a staple piece building at the heart of the city centre. The other, once a thriving city theatre now abandoned and derelict.



(Grundy, 1989)



(SwanseaBay, n.d.)

CONTEXT AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



(Sanghera, 2023)

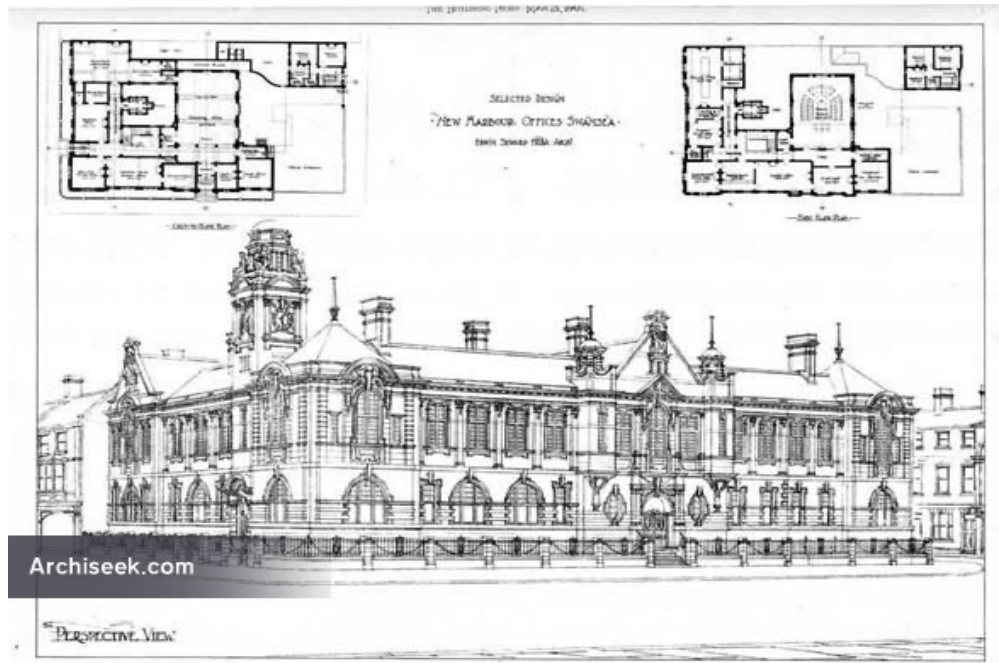
The Palace Theatre is located at 156 High Street. The Swansea Tramway Company funded the Theatre (Newman, 1995). The plot is a triangular space between two roads. The building is an early attempt at Baroque Revival (Newman, 1995). This is because of the use of bricks and stone together. The theatre is on a slight gradient from north to south. The surrounding buildings are all very different in style, which causes them to stick out a lot. This site has internal restraints, such as the stage end being on the apex side (Roe, 2008).

The Morgan Hotel is located on the Corner of Summerset Pl. and Adelaide St. The Originally named Harbour Trust Offices was conceived as a Staple piece in Arts and Crafts Baroque With fashionable art Nouveau details (Anon., n.d.). Initially, the building sat by a dock, but that later got filled in, and now many buildings are built upon this land. It is placed on a large plot allowing many rooms and big function rooms.

PLAN AND SECTION



For the Palace theatre, I couldn't obtain the original plans of the palace theatre from 1888. However, I have come across redevelopment plans for the theatre, which will turn into an office building. In these plans, you can see that the main structure is the outer wall. There are only a few weight-bearing walls in the interior except near the apex end of the triangle plan. I can also see support columns running from the ground floor up to the second-floor ceiling, supporting the third floor. Another feature I like is the use of the main theatre space. The Architects at GWPA have created an open area that spans the three stories. It opens an environment that would typically be enclosed into separate office spaces. The apex corner also has a cylindrical tower feature that rises higher than the main section of the building (Roe, 2008).



(Seward, 1901)

For the Morgan's Hotel, I retrieved a plan of the original building created for the Harbour Trust Offices. Which means I won't be able to analyse the interior of it in today's state. The plans are very blurry, but I can see that it is mostly all solid wall construction, even the interior walls. It has a significant function room that residents can use for many things. The function room reflects on the first floor as an atrium space.

MATERIALS

When looking at the Palace Theatre, we can see the use of light sand-coloured stone and red bricks. The contrast between the materials helps it stand out from the surrounding buildings. Using stone allows the architect to create detailed features for the exterior. Internally the architect uses many materials, such as steel, wood, and brick. There would also be many decorative materials such as plaster and paints. The stone and brick stripes are attractive designs which run horizontally across the first-floor section. Its derelict state of the building hides what was once a stunning building in its time. The exterior is made from and has many stone features. The features are mainly around the doorway, Windows and lining of the roof's edge.

When researching materials used at Morgan's hotel, I found nothing. However, by examining it and looking at the material used in that period, we know the architect used stone and red brick for the Exterior walls. The durability of these materials has allowed the building to last many years, not to mention the frequent maintenance to upkeep the aesthetics of the building. The exterior of the building is very aesthetic, with brick and stone to give it a baroque style. The facades consist of heavily detailed stonework, from the windows to the doorways and the corner linings.

USE

Palace theatre operates as an entertainment space. Visitors enter the main entrance south of the building and join a social area used as a waiting room and ticket office. It flows in many ways to allow them to enter the main theatre. The palace had many open spaces for the public to come and socialise and listen to music. It is hard to determine the theatre's original layout as no plans are available. The theatre has many private sections, such as the basement, 4th story, and the area behind the stage.

The Morgan hotel has a limited amount of information on how it operates, as I only have a few up-to-date plans for the hotel. However, there would be a main lobby where visitors enter as they walk through the door. The restaurant in the atrium is open to the public and residents. This social space would be known to be a loud area. I need help determining whether the hotel's function and operation are successful due to the need for more information.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, I have discussed the Palace Theatre and Morgan's Hotel in detail by highlighting their history, context, design, and materials used in their construction. The Palace Theatre, built in 1888 by Bucknall & Jennings (Anon., n.d.), is an early example of Baroque Revival architecture, combining bricks and stone (Newman, 1995). The Morgan's Hotel, completed in 1902 and designed by Edwin Seward (Anon., n.d.), is a staple piece in Arts and Crafts Baroque, with fashionable Art Nouveau details (Anon., n.d.). The Palace Theatre, unfortunately, is currently derelict, but the Morgan's Hotel still stands today, showcasing the durability of the materials used in its construction. The Palace Theatre is an essential piece of architectural history in Swansea, and now unfortunately, it is not in use. The Morgan's Hotel, on the other hand, still serves as an aesthetic and operational building, an accurate representation of the skill and craftsmanship of the architects and builders of the past.

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