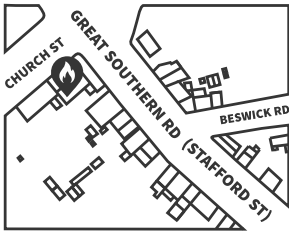


Timaru has very special architecture, but it came from immense destruction. A fire erased two thirds of the early business part of town, paving the way for the heritage buildings we see today.

1868 In the same year Timaru became a Borough, one of the most disastrous fires ever known in the colony took place on 7 December.

17 Years after the first European house was built on George St, the town had grown to around 1250 dwellings. The business part of town was one street just under 1km. The buildings were wooden with shingle roofs.



The map shows where the fire started on the corner of Great Southern Rd, (Stafford St) and Church St. It was a small cabinet makers workshop behind Mr D. Munro's furniture warehouse. Above left: The same corner years later Te Papa (C.014407)

1 Boy left one pot of glue melting on a small stove for a few moments. At 3:30pm some shavings caught fire, and within minutes the building was in flames. Imagine what must have gone through the boys mind when he discovered the fire.

1 Tap handle could have given access to a water tank, but it was missing. There were no networks of water pipes then, only a few wells scattered around the town. The fire was starting to spread to near by properties.

32 Members in the Hook and Ladder Company only had buckets, ladders and poles with a hook attached. With no sufficient water supply, all they could do was attempt to pull down buildings and structures with the hope of preventing the fire from spreading.

3 Hours is all it took. A hot nor-west wind fanned the flames and by 6:30pm all that remained were rows of chimneys and ashes.

39 Wooden buildings were destroyed. A reporter estimated property worth "at least £70,000", about \$8 million today, was lost. No-one died but more than 120 people were left homeless with the clothes on their backs. Not everyone was insured.

1 Enquiry into the cause of the fire was taken by B. Woolcombe Esq with a jury, the verdict "Accidental fire, with carelessness"

16 Months after the fire, a public meeting saw a unanimous vote to establish a volunteer fire brigade. A fire engine was loaned by a Christchurch insurance company.

1869 A council bylaw ruled that new buildings in the CBD had to be constructed of masonry. The 1870 Landing Services Building is a great example of this.

The architecture reflects times of growth and prosperity in the district's history.

It's amazing to think...

what was a dirt track for bullock wagons, lined with a wooden buildings, could rise from the ashes to become, sealed Stafford Street for cars, lined with significant heritage buildings.

- A "WuHoo" to discover and admire.

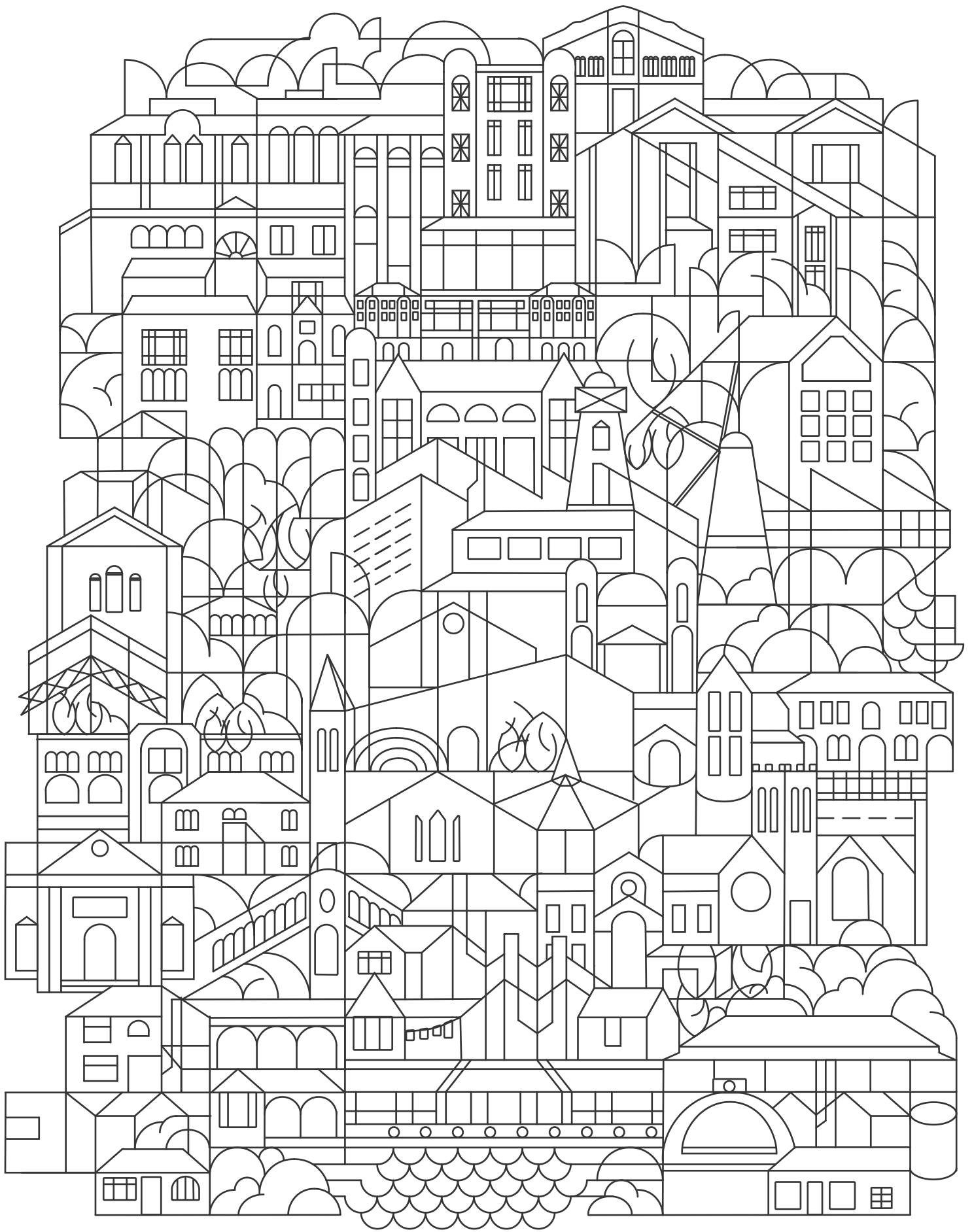
WuHOO Challenge

Colour in the reverse side inspired by Timaru's significant Buildings. How many can you identify?

VISIT WUHOO TIMARU TO TAKE ON THE "LOOK UP, LOOK DOWN" CBD CHALLENGE

Find Blue Plaques that celebrate our built heritage and tells stories of buildings historical significance.

Download the free Timaru Trails APP to take a self guided tour of the Central Business District. It features one of the most significant collections of Victorian and Edwardian buildings, reflecting times of growth and prosperity in the district's history.



CBD HERITAGE
TIMARU'S 1868 GREAT FIRE

Colourful Facts

You are welcome to print and share to celebrate Timaru. But artwork is not to be used for financial gain. Artwork By Roselyn Fauth © WuiHooTimaru 2019

  [WuhooTimaru.co.nz](https://www.WuhooTimaru.co.nz)

