

University flat-naming tradition



Above: **The Palace on Ellis**, named because it is on Ellis Street. Palace is a reference to the pub in *Once for Warriors* by Alan Duff.

Above right: **Baghdad Backpackers**

Almost all of us have lived – or survived – in flats at Otago. These days, most flats have heat pumps and modern gadgets to make life comfortable – but many of us will remember the hardship of the famed “flating experience”. Still, most of us look back fondly with memories of friendships formed, collegiality, laughter, personal character-building, and the wonderful, unique personalities of our old flats.

Indeed, University flats are so well loved for their personalities that flat naming is a student tradition. Campus streets are adorned with colourful, often humorous or tongue-in-cheek signs, and **The Flat Names**

Project researches these unique flats and their histories.

Sarah Gallagher started the project as part of her own studies - and it grew from there. The Dunedin Flat Names Project was profiled by Otago historian Ali Clarke on her 'Otago 150 years' blog, and we love the research that Sarah Gallagher has put into the project and its websites! Photos of named flats such as 'Pink Flat', 'Brucie's Beenjamin' Butchery', and 'The CSI on Hyde' can be seen on the Dunedin Flat Names website and Flickr, and Sarah also runs both a Facebook and a Twitter account for the project @DnFlatNames. She is also currently turning her research into a book for publication. Here's a link to Sarah's own blog, where she profiles 'flat of the month', 660 Castle Street.

On our Facebook, we'll be featuring 'Named Dunedin flat' items, sharing Sarah's flat of the month and asking you to vote on your favourite flats! The first round of voting is on now – visit our Facebook and 'like' or comment to vote for your favourite.

If you lived in one of the 'named flats', we'd love to hear your stories. Or, do you have a favourite flat? Join us on our Facebook and share your memories... Or if you're not a Facebook fan, email us your memories at alumni@otago.ac.nz .

Images © Sarah Gallagher. [View her original images here.](#)