

Todd, Wemyss Wylton 1906 - 1961



Wemyss Wylton Todd [also known as W. Wylton Todd; also known as Wylton Todd] was born in Essendon, Victoria, Australia on 1 July 1906, and between 1923 and 1928 studied architecture at the University of Adelaide in Adelaide, South Australia, and at the South Australian School of Mines in Adelaide. He then worked in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, and in New York. In 1929 he arrived in London. After a year employed in the office of Burnet, Tait & Lorne in London, England, he decided to settle in London where he established his own independent practice in 1932.

Projects by Todd included a shop for Meg Scott at 60, South Molton Street in London (1934); offices at Evelyn Street, London (1934); shop for Pax Tobacco at 35B, Hans Crescent in London (1934); Dane Court, Bishops Avenue in London (1934); a house in Ashridge, Hertfordshire for David Balfour (1938); the restoration of St George's Chapel at RAF Biggin Hill in Biggin Hill, Surrey (1947); and, with Cecil Beaton, restoration work at the Duke of York's Theatre in London (1950).

A photograph of a living room in a house in London designed by Todd is illustrated in 'Design in the Home' by Noel Carrington (London: Country Life, 1933 p.34); and a photograph of a lounge designed by him is illustrated in 'Industrial Arts' vol.1, no.1, Spring 1936 (p.33).

Todd served as a Flight Lieutenant in RAF 169 Squadron during World War Two. In February 1944 his Mosquito II was shot down and he was captured and sent to Stalag Luft III in Sagan [now Zagan], Poland [the prisoner-of-war camp that was the subject of the film 'The Great Escape']. Whilst a prisoner Todd was actively involved in camp entertainments. He designed sets for stage productions, and

wrote a musical entitled 'Messalina'. Following the Great Escape from Stalag Luft III on 24-25 March 1944 which resulted in the execution of 50 POWs by the Gestapo, the Luftwaffe allowed Todd to design a memorial to them at the camp.

Following the war Todd resumed his architectural practice and had offices at 11 Duke Street, Manchester Square, London. In 1947 he was commissioned to design the St George's Chapel of Remembrance at the R.A.F. Aerodrome at Biggin Hill, Kent, which was erected in memory of the airmen killed in the Battle of Britain. In 1951 he designed the Duke of York Theatre and in the late 1950s he was Group Architect of Gordon Hotels Ltd.

Todd was an Associate of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (ARAIA). He was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) in 1936 and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) in 1946. Todd died in London, England on 18 June 1961

The State Archives of South Australia in Adelaide, South Australia have a file on Todd.

Worked in

UK

Links

- WikiTree <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Todd-5632>
- Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660-1980
http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=408634
- The Wartime Memories Project - The second War
<http://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/view.php?uid=210504>
- The National Archives
<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/297c60f2-f464-4208-ba42-2761904feb22>