

GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME former Ambrose's Buildings [façade]

ADDRESS 30 Medway Street, Gore

PHOTOGRAPH



(April 2022)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. H29 **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** n / a
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 2 DP 6476

GDC FILE NUMBER 3241062

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1906

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Mackenzie & Wilson, architects

STYLE Commercial classicism

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-storey building façade with chamfered corner. Square-headed windows on ground floor with arched windows on first; latter have keystones and capital blocks. Pilasters divide bays. Bullnose return veranda extends the full length of the Hokonui Drive elevation and for a short length along Medway Street. Side entry with suspended canopy on Medway Street elevation; dentilled cornice and solid parapet with semi-circular pediment at corner.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Overpainted brick, cement plaster, metal veranda posts and roof.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Building demolished and rebuilt with façade retained: veranda and semi-circular pediment reinstated with original veranda post capitals reused; ground floor shop windows and corner entry removed and replaced with new fenestration (Mollinson & Associates, architects; 2010).

SETTING

The façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings stands on the north side of Medway Street, overlooking its intersection with Hokonui Drive, at the north end of the town centre. The scheduled setting is the land parcel on which the facade is located.

HISTORY

Ambrose's Buildings were erected as a rental property by Mary Ambrose in 1906. Ambrose was the daughter of early settler Edward Brennan and she acquired the subject lot from her brother James in 1887. Mary Brennan (c.1864-1939) had married Thomas Ambrose in 1882 and it appears that the couple had 11 children. Thomas was a Mandeville storekeeper before he and Mary married and settled in Gore; a fire in October 1882 destroyed his shop and led to his bankruptcy in December 1883. James Anderson of the A1 Bakery announced in November 1906 that he was moving into the new Ambrose's Buildings, where he offered a dining room upstairs. Anderson's premises were taken over by Jane Learmont in April of the following year. Mrs Learmont also ran a boarding house on the first floor; on the ground floor in the autumn of 1907 was McDonald's City Boot Palace. The property was sold by Mary Ambrose to Messrs Waddell and Wallis in May 1907. In December 1914 William Graham was running a billiard saloon in the building and by May 1919 the Gore Highland Society had its rooms upstairs. Fires severely damaged the building in June 1936 and October 1938, the former gutting the whole building; at the time Star Stores occupied the ground floor and the Gore Returned Soldiers Club the first. The property was subdivided to its current extent in 1963 and purchased by the Mataura Licensing Trust in 2007. With the exception of the façade the building was demolished and rebuilt in 2010-11; the new structure was renamed Thomas Green, in honour of Gore's first mayor.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings has historic significance for its association with Mary Ambrose and her family and, more generally, the development of Gore's town centre.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings has cultural value as a demonstration of contemporary attitudes towards heritage conservation.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings has architectural significance for its commercial classical design by Invercargill architects Mackenzie & Wilson. The firm, which was established in 1897, also designed the Gore Bakery building (1905) and a South African War memorial for Gore in 1900, as well as Catholic churches in Invercargill and Otautau. Edmund Wilson (1871-1941) was architect of the Civic Theatre in Invercargill (1906), one of New Zealand's most notable Edwardian Baroque style buildings.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings has technological and craftsmanship value for the quality of its Edwardian construction and classical detailing. The contractor for the building is currently unknown.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings has contextual significance as a prominent feature at the northern end of Gore's central business district.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the facade post-dates 1900, its site was monitored for archaeological evidence at the time of its 2010/11 redevelopment because earlier buildings (pre-1887) occupied the site. The property is now recorded as archaeological site F45/7.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings has overall heritage significance to Gore and to the district of Gore as a whole. The building has historic significance for its association with Mary Ambrose and her family and, more generally, the development of the town centre and cultural value as a demonstration of contemporary attitudes towards heritage conservation. The façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings has architectural significance as an Edwardian commercial classical design by noted Invercargill architects Mackenzie & Wilson and contextual significance as a prominent feature within the town centre. The property is recorded as an archaeological site.

REFERENCES

- *Mataura Ensign* 8 September 1900, p. 2; 5 September 1903, p. 2; 22 October 1904, p. 5; 9 May 1906, p. 3; 9 October 1906, p. 3; 6 November 1906, p. 1; 26 November 1906, pp. 2 & 3; 19 March 1907, p. 3; 22 April 1907, p. 3; 9 February 1912, p. 7; 22 December 1914, p. 7; 22 October 1918, p. 2; 28 May 1919, p. 6.
- *Southland Times* 22 December 1883, p. 3; 26 January 1897, p. 2; 26 January 1898, p. 2.
- *NZ Tablet* 11 April 1901, p. 19; 9 March 1905, p. 6.
- *Daily Telegraph* 12 December 1900, p. 4.
- *Otago Daily Times* 8 August 1938, p. 12.
- *Evening Star* 5 October 1882, p. 2; 1 October 1938, p. 26.
- *Mt Bengier Mail* 3 June 1936, p. 3.
- Angela Middleton 'Ambrose's Building, Gore', archaeological report for Mataura Licensing Trust, May 2011.

REPORT COMPLETED

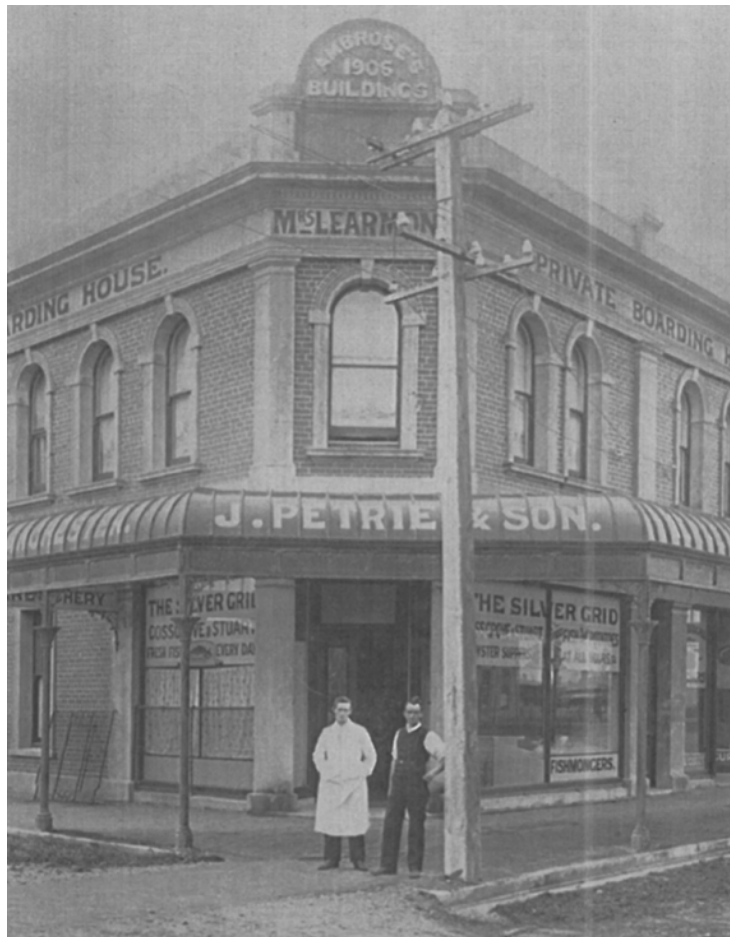
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AUTHOR

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Extent of scheduling, façade of the former Ambrose's Buildings, 30 Medway Street, Gore. [Aerial shows building site before redevelopment].



The building in c.1911. GDC.