

GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School
[former Mataura School building]

ADDRESS 60 Kana Street, Mataura

PHOTOGRAPH



(October 2021)

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

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Sections 1, 2 & 3 Block IV Town of Mataura Bridge

GDC FILE NUMBER 3215215, 3205812 & 3257466

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1910-11 + 1932-33

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** WA McCaw, architect & WP Thorn, contractor (1910-11); ER Wilson, architect (1932-33)

STYLE Neoclassical & Georgian Revival

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with T-shaped footprint and gabled roof forms. Apsidal vestry on north elevation with cross-gabled wing at rear (south). Lantern on roof apex at crossing, circular windows set into the gable ends. Narrow, multi-pane arch-headed windows light the nave; tripartite window with hood mould lights end (west) wall of Sunday School wing. Rear (south) wall has square-headed windows with glazing bars and fanlights; sills are carried on consoles.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Concrete foundations, brick, corrugated metal.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Centennial Hall erected (1973); vestry added (1996); new entry constructed (1997). New windows installed in Sunday School wing (date unknown).

SETTING

The Mataura Presbyterian Church stands on the east side of Kana Street; the site is bounded to the north by Crawford Street. On the opposite side of Kana Street is the Tutura Māori Reserve. The property is open to the street; to the east of the church is a carpark and a modern hall, which is linked to the church at the latter's south-east corner. The scheduled setting encompasses the three land parcels on which the church is located.

HISTORY

The land on which Mataura's Presbyterian church and manse (54 Kana Street) are located was set aside as an Educational Reserve when the Town of Mataura Bridge was surveyed in 1874. The settlement's first school opened on the site of the former BNZ building in 1874; four years later a new school was built on the south corner of Kana Street and Crawford Road. In 1910-11 a new infants' room was added to the school, this was the first masonry building on the site. The school moved to its current location in 1924, thus allowing for its former site to be redeveloped. Earlier Mataura's first Presbyterian church had opened in May 1877 on the east side of Kana Street opposite its intersection with Forth Street. This was a timber hall-type Gothic Revival style building. Tenders for a new church, as an addition to the brick school building already on the subject site, were called in September 1932 and the building was opened by the Rev A McNeur of Milton on Wednesday 29 March of the following year. The Mataura Presbytery was closely involved in the events that led to the Rev Lloyd Geering's trial for heresy in 1967. The church's Centennial Hall was erected in 1973 and further additions were made to the church in 1996 and 1997. Today the church is part of the Mataura parish and hosts services at 11.00am each Sunday.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School has historic and social significance for its association with the educational history of Mataura, the local Presbyterian congregation and, more generally, the development of the Presbyterian church in Southland.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School has cultural and spiritual significance as a former school and as a place of Christian worship, identity and historic continuity.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School has architectural significance for its two-part design by two notable Southland architects, WA McCaw and ER Wilson. William Armstrong McCaw (1863-1955) was appointed architect to the Southland Education Board in 1893 and held the position for 36 years. He had been born in Scotland and came to New Zealand as a young man, working for a period as a builder and architect in Gore before moving to Invercargill. McCaw was the Session Clerk of First Presbyterian Church in Invercargill for 56 years and his obituary in 1955 noted that one of his grandsons was All Black WA [Bill] McCaw, who was born in Gore. The second stage of the building was designed by Invercargill Edmund Wilson (1871-1941), who also designed Gore High and Technical School (1910-11) and the Civic Theatre in Invercargill (1906), one of New Zealand's most iconic Edwardian Baroque style buildings. Born and trained in Invercargill, Wilson undertook a large number of church commissions in Southland and beyond. Wilson was an active member of the Anglican church and a leader in the architectural profession. Although he favoured the Gothic Revival style for his Anglican church designs, it would appear that Wilson chose a Georgian Revival style for the Presbyterian church at Mataura in response to the form of the earlier school building.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School has technological and craftsmanship significance for the quality of its brick construction and detailing. William Thorn was a local contractor who was still active in the late 1930s, when he successfully tendered to build five state houses in Mataura. The contractor of the 1932-33 church addition is currently unknown.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School has contextual significance as a local landmark.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the church post-dates 1900, its site has potential archaeological values relating to the earlier development of the property as an educational reserve.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School [former Mataura School building] has high overall heritage significance to Mataura and to the district of Gore as a whole. The building has historical and social significance for its association with both the early years of Mataura School and the local Presbyterian congregation and cultural and spiritual significance given its former educational and current ecclesiastical purposes. The Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School has high architectural significance for its design by two notable Southland architects, WA McCaw and ER Wilson, and technological and craftsmanship significance for the quality of its brick construction and detailing. The Mataura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School has contextual significance as a local landmark; its site has potential archaeological value.

REFERENCES

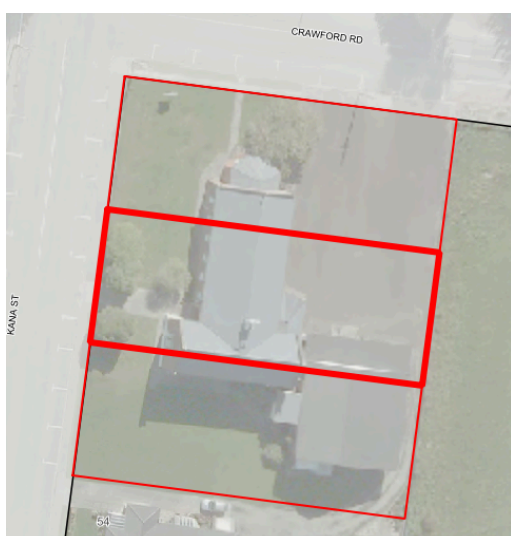
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REPORT COMPLETED

13 May 2022

AUTHOR

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Extent of scheduling, encompassing all three marked lots, Mātaura Presbyterian Church & Sunday School, 60 Kana Street, Mātaura.



The church in c. 1935, with the former infants' room on the right. Presbyterian Archives.