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Hobart Tasmania 7001
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Name: St Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Status: Permanently Registered
Tier: State

THR ID Number: 4964
Municipality: Northern Midlands
Council
Boundary: Whole of Title

Location Addresses

55 HIGH ST, CAMPBELL TOWN 7210 TAS

Title References

153978/1

Property Id

6203079



Former St Andrew's Church, 1857 Church
DPIPWE, 2011



1857 Church & 1955 Hall
DPIPWE, 2011



1955 Hall
DPIPWE, 2011

Statement of Significance: (non-statutory summary)

The former St Andrew's Presbyterian Church at 55 High Street, Campbell Town, is of historic cultural heritage significance as it demonstrates the pattern of settlement in the Northern Midlands district, and the role of established religion in developing social and spiritual hubs in regional settlements across Tasmania. The 1857 Church building is demonstrative of the Victorian Academic Gothic style, while the 1955 hall reflects utilitarian architecture in use after World War Two. The 1857 Church building and its park-like setting has meaning to the Tasmanian community as a landmark on the Midland Highway and the main church building has a special association with the architectural firm, Thomson and Cookney, who were responsible for

ecclesiastical architecture in both the north and south of the state.

Why is it significant?:

The Heritage Council may enter a place in the Heritage Register if it meets one or more of the following criteria from the Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995:

a) The place is important to the course or pattern of Tasmania's history.

The former St Andrew's Presbyterian Church at 55 High Street, Campbell Town, is an important element in demonstrating the evolutionary pattern of the Northern Midlands district. It reflects the role of worship, and in particular, the role of established religion in developing social and spiritual hubs in regional settlement across Tasmania. Erected in the 1850s, the former Presbyterian Church's presence on the site is an historic record of Campbell Town's religious life, demonstrating aspects of the community's development and growth.

b) The place possesses uncommon or rare aspects of Tasmania's history.

No Data Recorded

c) The place has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Tasmania's history.

No Data Recorded

d) The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of place in Tasmania's history.

The former St Andrew's Presbyterian Church at 55 High Street, Campbell Town, reflects the principal characteristics of the Victorian Academic Gothic ecclesiastical building through the use of a landmark tower, steeply pitched roof and tower crenellations. The choice of stone as building material and the Victorian Academic Gothic architectural style of the main church building harks back to the early phase of Campbell Town's development, when local stone was the dominant building material. The use of concrete bricks for the Adam Turnbull Hall also demonstrates the economical utilitarian post-war design, built in 1955 during the period of post-war austerity.

e) The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement.

No Data Recorded

f) The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social or spiritual reasons.

The former St Andrew's Presbyterian Church at 55 High Street, Campbell Town, has meaning to the Tasmanian community as a marker on the Midland Highway, the main thoroughfare between the state's two major cities, Hobart and Launceston. The historic town has traditionally been used as a rest stop during travel, and its heritage buildings and historic plantings as a result are imprinted in the minds of Tasmanians and tourists alike.

g) The place has a special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Tasmania's history.

The former St Andrew's Presbyterian Church at 55 High Street, Campbell Town, has a special association with the Rev. Adam Turnbull, the minister and government official largely responsible for galvanising the fundraising effort to erect the building, and who later served as its minister for over two decades and was commemorated in a marble plaque in the building. The former St Andrew's Church also has an association with the architectural firm Thomson and Cookney, responsible for Catholic Churches in Launceston and Hobart and the Jewish Synagogue in Hobart.

h) The place is important in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

No Data Recorded

Heritage approval is required for work that will result in changes to the nature or appearance of the fabric of a Heritage place, both internal and external.

Please refer to the Heritage Council's Works Guidelines (www.heritage.tas.gov.au) for information about the level of approval required and appropriate outcomes.

Heritage Advisors are also available to answer questions and provide guidance on enquiries@heritage.tas.gov.au or Tel 1300850332

This data sheet is intended to provide sufficient information and justification for listing the place on the Heritage Register. Under the legislation, only one of the criteria needs to be met. The data sheet is not intended to be a comprehensive inventory of the heritage values of the place, there may be other heritage values of interest to the Heritage Council not currently acknowledged.

Setting:

The former Presbyterian Church at 55 High Street is situated in the northern Tasmanian township of Campbell Town, located on the historic Midland Highway. The site is a triangular parcel of land dotted with historic trees and located at the main egress/ingress into the historic town. The site is an important visual landmark on the edge of the township, on the busiest highway in the state.

Description:

The former Campbell Town Presbyterian Church comprises two main buildings – the 1857 sandstone church building and the 1955 Adam Turnbull Hall. Both buildings are located in a mature parkland setting, which contributes to the historic heritage significance of the place. A small collection of artefacts provenanced to the main church building also forms part of this registration.

1857 former St Andrews Presbyterian Church: Set on the peak of the hill, the former St Andrews Church is a sandstone Victorian Academic Gothic building comprising tower with steep pitch and tower crenellations, corrugated iron gabled roof, boxed eaves, buttresses, pointed arch windows of stain glass, and prominent quoins and architraves. Entry is via a landmark square tower with blank clock face. The spire is octagonal in shape. The interior of the main church building contains fine examples of stained glass work, arched ceiling with decorative ceiling roses and wooden floorboards. Original interior doors, entrance flagstones, cornices and skirting boards contribute to the representative character of the style of the building. A representative sample of boxed pews has been retained with the building.

Church artefacts: A number of artefacts provenanced to the former main church building are considered of heritage significance, providing an understanding of the evolution of worship in a rural community, and the meaning such places had to the region. This registration includes the following elements:

(i) *Marble plaque commemorating the Rev. Adam Turnbull;*

(ii) *Memorial plaque commemorating the Gibson family by Tasmanian woodcarver, cement modeller and artist WG (Gordon) Cumming, c1938. This work was based on Gustave Dore's engraving 'Boat of Souls' (pers. comm., H. Cumming, 2013);*

(iii) *Granite sculpture, Head of Christ, by Kalanabertzins c1956;*

(iv) *1914-1918 carved wooden honour roll board;*

(v) *Altar, also known as the Bishops' Chair;*

(vi) *Double handed cedar collection box; and*

(vii) *Blackwood collection plate, gilt-engraved in memory of WH Thollar, killed during WW1.*

1955 Adam Turnbull Hall: Located on the lower side of the site, this concrete block single-storey hall building uses fabric and form sympathetic to the original design of the main church building. The structure comprises a gabled roof with short sheet corrugated iron, an entrance porch with similarly gabled roof and pointed sash windows with gothic influences. The external envelope of this building is of interest to this registration, contributing to the wider setting of the church grounds. The interior of the hall is not considered of interest to this registration and is therefore exempt from works application approval.

Landscape setting: The parkland/garden setting of both the church and hall are considered of high heritage significance for its historic and aesthetic values, and as a contributing element to an important landmark on a major Tasmanian thoroughfare. A wooden picket fence, evident in 1908, has been removed (*Weekly Courier* 18 June 1908:18). A number of elm and other trees form a perimeter along the border of the parcel of land. Although individually these trees are not considered of particular importance, as a suite of historic plantings they are considered of heritage significance, adding to the character of the site.

History:

Named by Governor Macquarie in 1821, Campbell Town prospered because of adjoining successful sheep farms, and its situation on the main thoroughfare between Hobart and Launceston. Convict labour is most evident in the historic town in the Red Bridge and large number of surviving Georgian and Victorian buildings. The local agricultural show has been held since 1839 (Richards in Alexander (ed.) 2005:63-64), one of the longest in the nation.

As early as 1821 European settlers had begun to organise for the establishment of reformed services in Van Diemen's Land. As many of the early settlers were of Scottish origin, Scottish Presbyterian ministers were sought. Following Hobart, the first Presbyterian church to be built in the colony was on the Macquarie River in c1836, the present Kirklands Church (THR #4909). It was almost two decades before a more substantial Presbyterian church, now the former St Andrew's Church at 55 High Street, was erected in Campbell Town, in 1857.

The Anglican Church had an early presence in Campbell Town, erecting a church in the late 1830s, while the Methodist congregation had erected their modest Chapel by 1839. In July 1856 tenders were called for the erection of a Presbyterian church (*Launceston Examiner* 31 July 1856:3), said to have been largely the initiative of medical practitioner, public servant and minister Rev. Adam Turnbull, who had spent two decades in Hobart Town holding various government positions. His energy and connections are largely attributed with the erection of St Andrew's. The foundation stone was laid at the end of 1856 (*Launceston Examiner* 30 December 1856).

St Andrew's Church was designed by Thomson & Cookney, architects of Hobart (*Launceston Examiner* 29 January 1857:2). Cookney, as a free man, had been appointed Colonial Architect of New South Wales aged only 26, and by the age of 41 after a conviction for receiving stolen goods, was working on road gangs in Tasmania. During his time in the island colony, Cookney was assigned to ex-convict architect, JA Thomson. The pair collaborated for over a decade, including designs for Catholic churches in Hobart and Launceston and the Jewish synagogue in Hobart. In 1855 JA Thomson retired, and his son FW entered the partnership (Neale, in Goad & Willis (eds) 2012:172-173 & 704).

It was FW Thomson and Cookney who were responsible for the design of St Andrew's Church in Campbell Town, which according to one architectural historian displayed little advance from designs of 16 years previously (Neale, in Goad & Willis (eds) 2012:172-173 & 704). In 1863 a JC Bishop pipe organ was installed in the church, said to be the largest organ in Australia built before 1850 by JC Bishop to survive unaltered. The organ was removed from the church in recent decades and now forms part of the National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) collection (Maidment, 2010:2).

The land on which the main church was constructed remained virtually untouched until the congregation determined the need for a hall after World War Two. The foundation stone for a new hall (*Examiner* 30 September 1955) was laid in 1955, named in honour of Rev. Adam Turnbull, proponent of the original church building. It appears this building was also used as a schoolroom (National Trust, 1966:29). This is the concrete brick building still extant on the eastern boundary of the site.

In 1977 the Uniting Church was established through the amalgamation of the Methodist and the majority of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches in Tasmania. Stabilisation work was undertaken to the spire of the main church building in 1981, with a grant from the National Estate (*Examiner* 12 March 1981:20b). Steel rods were to be inserted, although it is unclear if this work was actually undertaken. In 2002 the Synods of Tasmania and Victoria merged, the Uniting Church continuing its commitment to social justice, liturgical renewal, ecumenical relationships and pastoral care to this day (Smith, in Alexander (ed.) 2006:372). In 2010 the Campbell Town buildings were deconsecrated and sold to a private buyer. Although no longer a church, the buildings and plantings on site remain an important visual marker on the Midland Highway.

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Neale, A. in Goad, P. & Willis, J. 2012 *Encyclopaedia of Australian Architecture* Cambridge University Press, Hobart

Richards, J. in Alexander, A. (ed.) 2005 *The Companion to Tasmanian History* University of Tasmania, Hobart

Weekly Courier 18 June 1908, 1 November 1934.