



Wesley Methodist Church, Regent Street

1905

Use	Church	Historic Value	4 out of 5
Materials	Timber framing, cladding and joinery, corrugated iron roof	Architectural Value	3 out of 4
NZHPT Registered	Category II Register Number 865	Technical Value	1 out of 2
Valuation No	12340-350-00	Symbolic Value	1 out of 3
Legal Description	Lots 1-4 DP 15607	Rarity	1 out of 2
		Townscape Value	1 out of 2
		Group Value	- out of 2
		Overall Cultural Heritage Value	11 out of 20
Map Reference	RW1		

Description

The Wesley Methodist Church is timber framed and is sheathed in wide rusticated weatherboards; the windows are timber and are round-headed on the front facade to Regent Street and have pointed Gothic openings along the north and south sides of the nave. In fact the church has a mix of Gothic and classical elements, the front entrance being framed by two pairs of Ionic columns and a triangular pediment above. The high, shallow pitch roof has an ornate gable with close-spaced bracketing reminiscent of the Pisan Gothic style.

History

Construction of the Wesley Methodist Church began in November 1905, and was completed in April 1906. The building is the third church to be located on this site, the two previous churches (built in 1876 and 1883 respectively) were converted to Sunday School and hall buildings. One of the foundation stones of the church was laid by Rev. T Hammond of the Wesleyan Maori Mission, and the other by the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. Two towers which used to adorn the top corners of the building were removed in 1951 for safety reasons.

The church grounds are also historically significant as the Hartman Memorial Garden is situated within them. The memorial garden commemorates Rev. John Skevington, the first Wesleyan missionary to South Taranaki Maori. To mark the centenary in 1942, the memorial stone was brought in from the Inaha Stream, near Heretoa, the site of the establishment of the first Wesleyan Mission to South Taranaki in 1842.

Architect

Mr T H Gilman

Builder

Not known.

Statement of Significance

This church has historical significance for having served the Methodist community of Hawera since 1905, continuing a tradition that goes back over 120 years to 1876 when the first church was built on the site. It is an interesting building architecturally for its mix of styles, and is in original condition but for the loss of the two towers on the front facade. Although set back from the street, it contributes to the streetscape quality of the area as a dignified and decoratively interesting building, well maintained, and still serving its original use after some 92 years.

Sources

Wesley Methodist Church, Hawera, Centenary 1876-1976, Hawera (1976)
A Little Bit of History, A Fryer (1994); *Hawera Star* (17 April 1906)
South Taranaki District Council Archives

Date

June 1997