

Heritage Buildings Report

Site ID

Building/Site Name

Rev. Drew's Villa (Former)

Address

7 Pendarves Street, New Plymouth



Statement of Significance

Constructed in 1895-96 and likely designed by noted architect Frank Messenger, from its construction until the early-1920s this attractive villa was the residence of New Plymouth's first Baptist Minister, the Rev William Drew. The house has strong associations with the temperance/prohibition movement in New Plymouth for a period of more than fifty years until 1950. Mrs Drew was at one time president of the New Plymouth branch of the WCTU, whilst the property's second owner, Herbert Cocker, was a member of the Independent Order of Rechabites for 53 years. The house is significant as an early example of a corner bay villa and possibly the earliest surviving example in New Plymouth. Aside from the loss of some detailing and minor extensions, the exterior of the house largely retains its original form and contributes positively to the historic character of the surrounding area.



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Legal Information and Heritage Status

Legal Description Lot 2 DP 7636

District Plan Item/ Map No.

Heritage New Zealand List Not listed

Construction Information

Date of Construction Circa 1895-96

Principal Materials Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel

Construction Professionals Frank Messenger (presumed architect)

History

Part Town Section 1009, Town Section 1010 and Part Town Section 1011 (along with sections 1024, 1025, 1044 and 1045) were purchased by land agent W. J. Spurge in February 1894, seemingly for the purpose of on-selling.¹ On the 18th of August 1894 it was reported in the *Taranaki Herald* that Mr Bewley had sold “Mr Spurge’s town sections 1009, 1010, and 1011 to Mr H. Goodacre; and sections 1025, 1045 to Mr W. Shephard”.² Whilst the sale to Shephard was completed, the transaction to Hal Goodacre did not proceed, with no evidence in the Deed Register of Goodacre ever purchasing the property.³ However, the following month, on September 4th 1894, Part Town Section 1009, Town Section 1010 and Part Town Section 1011 were conveyed from Spurge to the Rev William Drew.⁴

The Rev William Drew, along with his wife and grown-up children, emigrated to New Plymouth from England in 1893.⁵ The Drew’s were encouraged to emigrate to New Zealand during one of local businessman William Courtney’s lecturing missions to the United Kingdom to recruit new emigrants for Taranaki.⁶ Although Courtney’s work has received little attention from historians, he completed at least thirteen lecturing trips to England and induced more than one thousand persons to emigrate to New Zealand.⁷

William Drew was a Baptist Minister, whilst the couple’s children, one son and two daughters, were certified teachers.⁸ They travelled to New Zealand aboard the *Tongariro*, arriving at Wellington on October 4th 1893, before taking the *Takapuna* to New Plymouth, arriving on October 6th.⁹ It seems the Drew’s were only intending to stay in New Plymouth for a short period before relocating to Christchurch.¹⁰ However, soon after arrival in New Plymouth, the Rev. Drew was offered, and accepted, a twelve-month position as Minister to the local Baptist congregation.¹¹

¹ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

² *Taranaki Herald*, 18 August 1894, page 2

³ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 9 October 1893, page 2

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ *Taranaki Daily News*, 3 December 1908, page 2

⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 9 October 1893, page 2

⁹ Ibid; *Taranaki Herald*, 6 October 1893, page 2

¹⁰ New Plymouth Central Baptist Church. (1993). *New Plymouth Central Baptist Church Centenary*. New Plymouth Central Baptist Church, New Plymouth

¹¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 October 1893, page 2

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The early history of the New Plymouth Baptist Church is a little unclear, although it is known that the first Baptist Church was erected on the north-eastern corner of Liardet and Gill Streets in 1868 (this survived as a petrol station into the 1980s until being regrettably demolished).¹² However, for reasons unknown, regular Baptist services never materialised and the building was instead used by the Church of Christ; it wasn't until the arrival of the Rev Drew in 1893 that the Baptist Church would be formally established in New Plymouth.¹³

The Rev William Drew first preached to local Baptists on Sunday 15th October 1893, and on Thursday 18th was welcomed at a social gathering to which ministers from other denominations were invited to attend.¹⁴ At a meeting chaired by the Rev Drew on October 23rd 1893, a group of local Baptists formally constituted themselves members of the Church, with Rev Drew as their first Minister; at this time the Church also became affiliated with the Baptist Union of Churches of New Zealand.¹⁵

Both Mr and Mrs Drew were strong advocates of the temperance movement in New Plymouth. Mrs Drew was especially involved in temperance activities and organisations from soon after her arrival, becoming President of the New Plymouth branch of the W.C.T.U until her resignation in August 1896 owing to ill health.¹⁶ Mrs Drew was replaced by her neighbour Mrs Allan Douglas, who resided in the house at present 11 Pendarves Street, at that time still located on its original site a few metres eastward.¹⁷



Detail from circa late 1890s (post 1897) view of New Plymouth from Marsland Hill showing house soon after completion. LN1076: A.3.81, Puke Ariki

¹² New Plymouth Central Baptist Church. (1993). *New Plymouth Central Baptist Church Centenary*. New Plymouth Central Baptist Church, New Plymouth

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 7 August 1896, page 2

¹⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 7 August 1896, page 2; Hamish Crimp, '11 Pendarves Street (circa 1860s)', *Kete New Plymouth*, <http://ketenewplymouth.peoplesnetworknz.info/en/site>; accessed 15 February 2019.



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It seems the Drew's initially resided on Elliot Road (now Tukapa Street) at Westtown, with Mrs Drew advertising for a general servant at an Elliot Road address during February 1894.¹⁸ The exact construction date of the present house is a little unclear but was likely during late-1895 or early-1896. Drew mortgaged the property on October 19th 1895, and this may relate to the construction of the present house.¹⁹ Rev Drew first appears as living in this location, under Carrington Road, from the 1896 Edition of Stone's Street Directory; it isn't until the 1899 edition that Rev Drew's address changes to Pendarves Street.²⁰ Mrs Drew advertised for a general servant at a Pendarves Street address in late-February 1896, indicating they had likely moved into the house by this time.²¹

The New Plymouth Borough Council Rates Book for 1894-95 notes the combined rateable value of Town Sections 1009, 1010, Pt 1011, 1024, 1025, 1044 and 1045 as just £8 and makes no mention of any house.²² However, by the 1896-97 rating year (the rates book for 1894-95 is missing), the value of just part Section 1011 has increased to £34 and a house, almost certainly the present villa, is now noted as being present on the property.²³ The value of adjacent Part Town Section 1009 and Town Section 1010 is noted at just £4.²⁴

Whilst not certain, the style of the house points strongly towards Frank Messenger being the architect. Francis John Messenger was born on 4 July 1865, the second son of William and Arabella. Frank was educated in New Plymouth, and trained with local architect Henry J. T Edmonds, before moving to Melbourne, where he worked for Oakden and Kemp for ten years.²⁵ In 1891, Messenger married his second cousin Lucy Messenger, before returning to New Plymouth in 1893; he commenced practice in New Plymouth the following year.²⁶ Frank Messenger and Horace Victor Griffiths entered into partnership in 1917, with William Taylor joining in 1920.²⁷ This partnership ceased in 1930, with Messenger and Taylor forming a new partnership; Leonard Wolfe later joined in a partnership that would last up until Messenger's death on 11 October 1945.²⁸

Messenger's commissions were numerous and varied, ranging from early villas, to bungalows and both timber and reinforced concrete commercial premises. This house is stylistically similar to two other near-contemporary Messenger designed villas erected at 58 and 78 Pendarves Street in 1894 (Messenger's earliest known surviving New Plymouth commissions), whilst the corner bay design, then very uncommon in New Zealand, would have been encountered by Messenger whilst practising in Melbourne.

The Rev Drew retired in 1899, although both he and Annie remained extensively involved with the New Plymouth Baptist Church and the temperance movement.²⁹ In 1903 Drew had the large property subdivided into two lots, retaining ownership of the eastern portion with house.³⁰ Both William and Annie resided in the house until their deaths, William on the 29th of August 1921, and Annie a year

¹⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 12 February 1894, page 3

¹⁹ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

²⁰ Stones Street Directories, 1896-99

²¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 24 February 1896, page 3

²² NPBC Rates Books 1894-95, NPDC Archives

²³ NPBC Rates Books 1896-97, NPDC Archives

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Pritchard, Ian. *Frank Messenger, Architect: The work of a New Plymouth architect*. New Plymouth: Ian Pritchard, 1994.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ New Plymouth Central Baptist Church. (1993). *New Plymouth Central Baptist Church Centenary*. New Plymouth Central Baptist Church, New Plymouth

³⁰ DP2188, Land Information New Zealand



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later on the 18th of September 1922.³¹

Following Mrs Drew's death, the property was purchased by Herbert Cocker. A Yorkshire native, Cocker emigrated to New Zealand with his wife and two daughters in the 1890s.³² First working as an accountant at the Fitzroy Bacon Factory, he was later a buyer for a grocery co-operative, before going into business as tea merchant in Currie Street.³³ In late 1904, Cocker relocated his shop to new shop premises (present 30 Devon Street East), which had recently been completed for owner Mr William Courtney.³⁴ Cocker soon diversified his business, advertising as an importer and agent for a number of different products.³⁵ From about 1908, his main business was tailoring, which he successfully pursued from the premises until his retirement in 1930.³⁶

Interestingly, like the Drew's, Cocker was also devoted to the temperance/prohibition movement, being a member of the Independent Order of Rechabites for 53 years.³⁷ Cocker was also an elder of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, involved in the Workers' Educational Association, had been President of the New Plymouth Chamber of Commerce and the Taranaki Master Tailor's Association.³⁸ Herbert passed away at the house on the 18th of December 1950, aged 88 years.³⁹ Following Cocker's death, the house was purchased by Mrs Catherine Doris Upshall.⁴⁰ However, it seems Cocker's unmarried daughter Jess continued to occupy the house for a time and is listed as residing at the house in the 1955 Edition of Wises Post Office Directory.⁴¹

In 1970, the property was purchased by Mrs Sylvia Mavis Penny, who only retained ownership until 1973, when the house was purchased by sheet metal worker Michael Joseph Wright and his wife Sandra.⁴² The Wright's sold the property to Antique Dealer Gary Albert Winther and his wife Rosemary in August 1975, before the house was purchased by present owner's, Lance and Ali Girling-Butcher, in 1982.⁴³ A long-time journalist and later editor of the Taranaki Daily News and Taranaki Herald, Lance was also a New Plymouth District Councillor until 2013.⁴⁴ After blindness forced his retirement from journalism, Lance become an advocate for blindness and disability in Taranaki, being awarded the Queens Service Medal for services to the blind and seniors in 2016.⁴⁵

³¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 29 August 1921, page 3; *Taranaki Herald*, 19 September 1922, page 2

³² *Taranaki Herald*, 19 December 1950, page 3

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ CT TN191/48, Land Information New Zealand

⁴¹ Wises Post Office Directory, 1955

⁴² CT TNA3/177, Land Information New Zealand

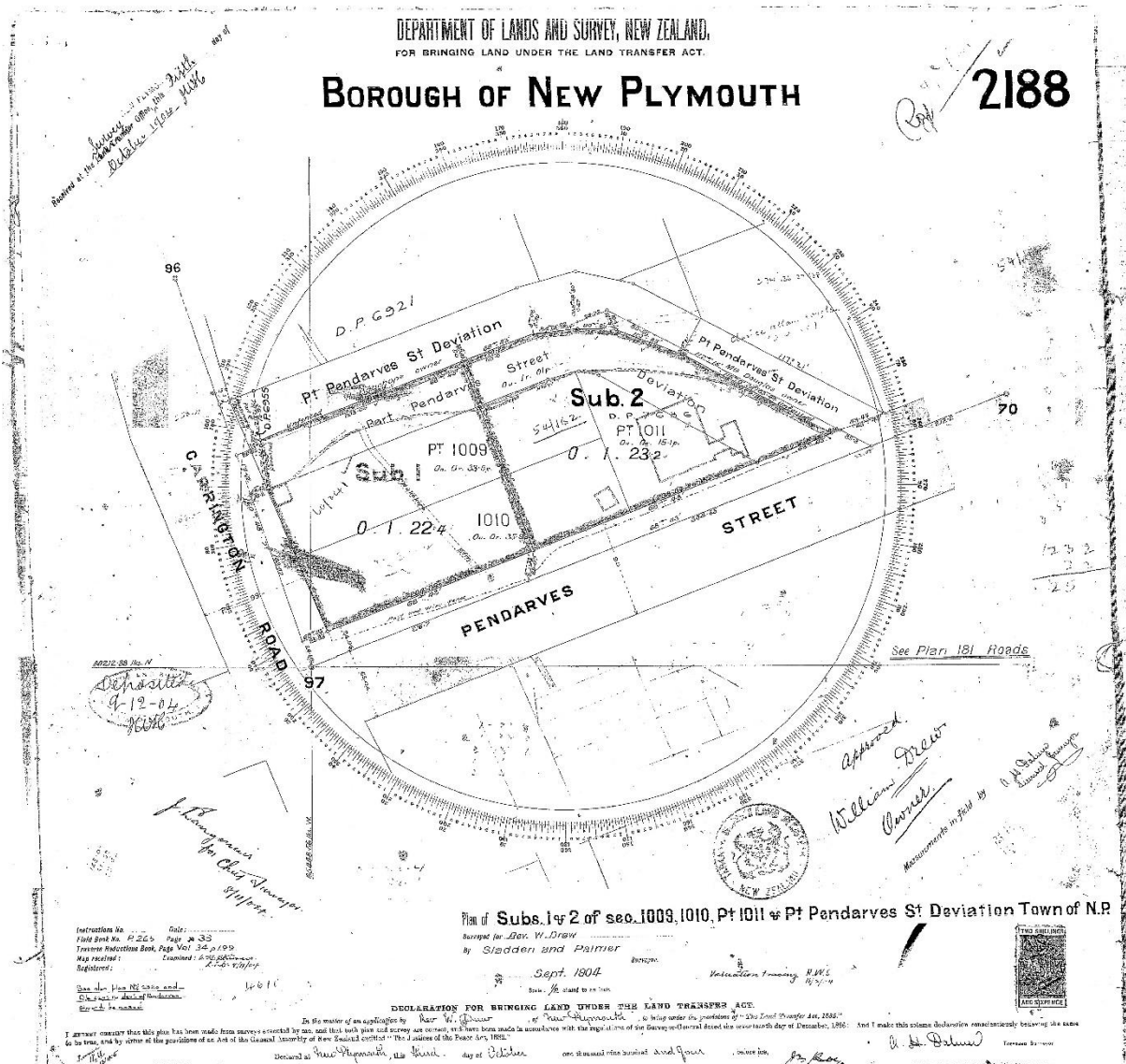
⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ *Taranaki Daily News*, 22 October 2018, page 5

⁴⁵ *Taranaki Daily News*, 6 June 2016, page 3



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DP2188, Land Information New Zealand

Reference Sources

See footnotes.

Description

Rev Drew's Villa (former) is located on the upper slopes of the historic Huatoki Stream Valley, just a short distance south of New Plymouth's colonial heart and present CBD. This area was settled early in New Plymouth's history, and the surrounding blocks contain a number of pre-1900 buildings, including neighbouring 11 Pendarves Street (circa 1860s), Issey Manor at 32 Carrington Street (1850s/1896), and Hosking House/Holmwood at 1 Victoria Road (1894). Whilst development pressures since the 1950s have resulted in an eclectic mix of architectural styles, the area still retains a sense of historical character now uncommon in New Plymouth.

The main form of the building is a timber framed centre gutter corner bay villa incorporating flush hipped gables, return veranda, rusticated weatherboard cladding, mild corrugated steel roof, and two double-flue brick chimneys. Whilst facing away from the present alignment of Pendarves Street, the house



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originally fronted the Pendarves Street deviation, which remained in place until 1904 and passed close to the north-western and north-eastern elevations.

The house is significant as an early example of a corner bay villa and possibly the earliest surviving example in New Plymouth. The corner bay villa didn't become popular in New Zealand until about a decade later in the mid-1900s, with examples from the 1890s scarce even in the fashionable inner-city suburbs of larger New Zealand centres. An interesting comparison can be made with the nearby corner bay villa at 29 Carrington Street; designed by Frank Messenger in 1908, it follows a similar plan but instead features a pyramidal roof with the more common gabled bays.

The north-western elevation incorporates the original main front entrance door and a pair of timber French casements. The projecting gable on this elevation, originally identical to that on the south-western elevation, was fitted with a projecting square bay window sometime during the early-1900s. This incorporates two front double-hung sashes and a slender sash on each of the side returns, with the shallow bay eaves fitted with slightly detailed timber brackets. A modern skylight has been fitted to the roof on this elevation. A concave post and beam veranda links the north-western and south-western bays, although the original decorative brackets are now absent and the balustrade replaced. A single double-hung sash is fitted beneath the veranda on the south-western elevation, whilst a pair of double-hung sashes are fitted to the gable-end; decorative elements include dentiling and eaves brackets.

A lean-to extends from the rear south-eastern elevation, this, rather interestingly, incorporates at either end a flat-topped parapet wall designed to disguise the slope of the skillion roof. Locally uncommon architectural features, the inclusion of rear lean-to parapet walls may be related to the villa's highly visible position, or simply a marker of astute design. The south-western end of the parapet is fitted with a single double-hung sash, whilst an extension at the north-eastern end of the lean-to was added by the current owners as a workshop area; this being finished in a style matching the original villa.

Assessment:

Historical	Constructed in 1895-96, this building has heritage significance for two main reasons. Firstly, the house was the residence of New Plymouth's first Baptist Minister the Rev William Drew from its construction until the 1920s. Secondly, the house has strong associations with the temperance/prohibition movement in New Plymouth for a period of more than fifty years until 1950. Mrs Drew was at one time president of the New Plymouth branch of the WCTU, whilst the property's second owner, Herbert Cocker, was a member of the Independent Order of Rechabites for 53 years.	✓
Importance to Community	Although the history of the building is little known, it has significance to the local Baptist congregation as the residence of their first Minister; the Baptist Church still meets nearby at the corner of Liardet and Lemon Streets.	✓
Architecture & Construction	This building has considerable architectural significance as a very early corner bay villa, being possibly the earliest surviving example in New Plymouth.	✓
Setting and Context	This building is located in an area rich in history from the early period on European settlement in New Plymouth. The surrounding blocks contain a number of older dwellings which contribute to a sense of historical character now uncommon in New Plymouth city. The	✓



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position and orientation of the house is related to the historic Pendarves Street deviation, which remained in place until 1904, when the street was formed along its present alignment.

Archaeology

As the building was constructed in circa 1895-96, the property likely has archaeological evidence relating to pre-1900 human activity and has the potential to reveal information about the past through archaeological investigation.

✓

Representativeness, rarity and integrity

Aside from the loss of some detailing and minor extensions, the exterior of the house largely retains its original form and is much as it was when first constructed. It is a rare example of a corner bay villa from the 1890s period in New Plymouth District.

✓

Meets threshold for listing (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)

✓

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