



Heritage Buildings Report

Site ID

Building/Site Name

Knox Church and Hall (Former)

Address

27 Cutfield Street, Inglewood



Statement of Significance

The former Knox Church and Hall has historic significance as the home of the Inglewood Presbyterian Church for a period of almost 70 years from 1902 until 1970. More recently the building was occupied by skilled glass-blowing artisans, most notably accomplished glass artist Tony Kuepfer. Comprised of two contiguous but distinct sections, the original 1902 church (later used as a hall) is situated at rear, whilst the 1926-27 replacement church is positioned at front. The building is associated with noted New Plymouth architects James Sanderson and the firm of Messenger, Griffiths and Taylor; both of whom contributed significantly to the built environment of North Taranaki during the early decades of the twentieth century. Located close to the street frontage, this building contributes positively to the surrounding streetscape and is one of a number of older buildings which give central Inglewood a special historic character.



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Legal Information and Heritage Status

Legal Description Lot 1 DP 10993

District Plan Item/ Map No.

Heritage New Zealand List Not listed

Construction Information

Date of Construction 1902/1926-27

Principal Materials Wooden framing, weatherboard, reinforced concrete, corrugated steel

Construction Professionals James Sanderson (architect for original 1902 portion); Messenger, Griffiths & Taylor (architects for 1926-27 portion); Messrs Arthur & Addinal (builders for 1926-27 portion)

History

In 1899 a committee was instituted for the purposes of establishing a Presbyterian Church at Inglewood.¹ Although still without a building of their own, the first Presbyterian service was conducted two years later on July 28th, 1901 by the Rev. S. S. Osborne at the Inglewood Foresters Hall.² Work was soon underway to find a suitable site for the erection of a church building, and during August 1901 a section in Cutfield Street was purchased for £50.³ By May the following year, well-known New Plymouth architect James Sanderson called for tenders for the erection of a Presbyterian Church at Inglewood.⁴ Sanderson had previously been involved in designing other ecclesiastical buildings in New Plymouth, including the St Mary's Community Centre/Badminton Hall (1888); the South Road Sunday School/St Aubyn Methodist Church (1892); and additions to both St Mary's Cathedral and Holy Trinity Church at Fitzroy.

On the 4th of August 1902 the foundation stone was laid by the Governor Lord Ranfurly whilst on an official visit to Inglewood.⁵ The ceremony was officiated by the Rev S. S. Osborne, who noted "a particular appropriateness in his Excellency's [Lord Ranfurly] performing the ceremony of laying the foundation stone as he was a descendent of the famous reformer John Knox, after whom the Church is to be named".⁶ Construction of the church, which cost £335 10s, was largely financed through collections and fundraising initiatives such as a sale of "fancy, useful and ornamental work" held in the Inglewood Foresters' Hall on November 20th 1902.⁷ The church was opened on Sunday 25th January 1903, with services to be held at both 11am and 7pm.⁸ These were conducted by the Rev. James Paterson, of St Johns Church in Wellington, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, who had travelled to Inglewood especially for the occasion.⁹

¹ *Taranaki Daily News*, 11 November 1952, page 3

² *Ibid.*

³ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 August 1901, page 2

⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 10 May 1902, page 2

⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 5 August 1902, page 2

⁶ *Ibid.*

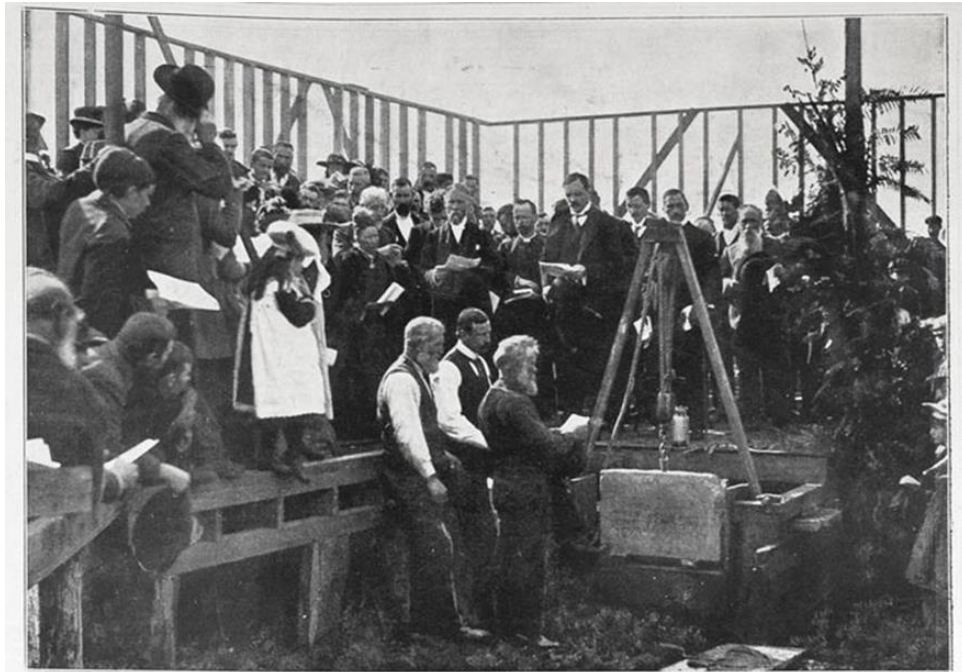
⁷ *Taranaki Daily News*, 11 November 1952, page 3; *Taranaki Herald*, 14 November 1902, page 4

⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 17 January 1903, page 5

⁹ *Ibid.*



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THE SERVICE AT THE LAYING OF THE STONE.

Showing the service with Lord Ranfurly laying the foundation stone for the Knox Presbyterian Church, Inglewood, Taranaki, 4 August 1902, Supplement to the Auckland Weekly News, 14 August 1902 page 5, Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections, AWNS-19020814-5-1



THE CROWD WITNESSING THE CEREMONY OF LAYING THE STONE.

Showing the crowd witnessing the ceremony of Lord Ranfurly laying the foundation stone for the Knox Presbyterian Church, Inglewood, Taranaki, 4 August 1902, Supplement to the Auckland Weekly News, 14 August 1902 page 5, Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections, AWNS-19020814-

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In 1926-27 the building was enlarged through the construction of a new reinforced concrete church directly in front of the original timber structure. Construction of the new church was prompted by the need for a church hall for Sunday school and social gatherings; a purpose for which the old church could be used once the new church was complete.¹⁰ Whilst planning for the new church began about 1923, construction was delayed until a sufficient portion of the £1180 construction cost could be raised; the sum of £425 was in hand by late-1926.¹¹ On the afternoon of Thursday December 16th, 1926, the honour of placing the foundation stone was given to Mrs J. Parli, one of the original members of the congregation whose name was number one on the original list of communicants.¹² Mrs Parli used a special silver towel to lay the stone and at this time a glass jar which had originally been embedded in the foundations of the old church was enclosed behind the new foundation stone, its contents being church records, which were updated for this occasion.¹³

A large crowd was present at the ceremony and included the Rev. Mr Boyd, local MP Mr E. Walter, Inglewood County Council Chairman Mr R. Stuart, and the Inglewood Borough Mayor Mr S. R. Darlow.¹⁴ A number of members from other denominations were present at the ceremony and the Rev. Boyd noted that “it was good that on some occasions they should gather together and forget the name of their church”.¹⁵ A function was later held in the hall (the old church), with speeches given by the Rev. H. Lindsey (Church of England), the Rev. J. W. Bayliss (Methodist), and Captain Prowse (Salvation Army).¹⁶ The new church was completed the following year and officially opened at a ceremony held on the afternoon of Thursday April 7th, 1927.¹⁷ The honour of declaring the church open was bestowed on Mrs D. Allen, one of the longest serving members of the congregation.¹⁸ The Rev. J. W. McGregor conducted the first service, and an address was then given by Rev. Evans to the more than 150 persons present at the occasion.¹⁹

Messrs Arthur and Addinal were the builders for the new church, which at 32ft x 32ft was slightly smaller than the old church, although could still seat 150 persons.²⁰ The design incorporated two aisles instead of one, and it was hoped this would encourage people to sit near the front.²¹ During construction, the original 1902 entrance porch was relocated to the northern elevation to provide a separate entrance to the hall, whilst the wall between the new church and hall was constructed of lath and plaster to permit later extensions.²² The vestries of the old church were converted into kitchen facilities with hot and cold running water.²³ At the time of completion, the interior walls of the new church were finished with dove-grey plaster to prevent any glare, whilst the ceiling featured exposed Oregon beams and ornamental fibrous plaster.²⁴

The architects for the new church were the noted New Plymouth firm of Messenger, Griffiths & Taylor (Frank Messenger, Horace Victor Griffiths & William Taylor).²⁵ Like Sanderson, Messenger was also involved in designing additions to both St Mary's Cathedral and Holy Trinity Church at Fitzroy, along

¹⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 17 December 1926, page 8

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 8 April 1927, page 10

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.



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with being the architect for a number of smaller rural churches including St Luke's at Bell Block and St Mark's at Lepperton. Central Inglewood, in particular Rata Street, is home to a significant cluster of buildings designed by Messenger and his subsequent partnerships. These buildings include Curtis' Buildings (1909), St Andrew's Church (1922), Inglewood County Council Offices (1923), Inglewood Municipal Library & Offices (1924), John McLean Grocer's Store, 90 Rata Street (1925), and the bakehouse at Somerton's Tearooms (1926).

No further alterations were made until the 1950s, when the low rear gable extension was erected sometime between 1951 and late-1958.²⁶ The church remained a place of worship until 1970, when the Presbyterian and Methodist churches at Inglewood became the first in Taranaki to unite; the last service held in Knox Church took place on the 29th of November 1970 and was conducted by the Rev. F. Ralph.²⁷ United services were (and continue to be) held in the former Methodist Church (constructed 1961) at the corner of Kelly and Brown Streets. Both the 1902 and 1926 foundation stones were relocated to the United Church site during 1970.

The former Knox Church was soon sold to an Inglewood development group, who in 1974 leased the buildings to Tony and Caroline Kuepfer. Recent arrivals from the United States, the Kuepfer's established a glass blowing studio on the site and had the narrow-gabled building to the south of the church building constructed soon after taking on the lease.²⁸ A pioneer of the industry in New Zealand, Tony is an accomplished glassblower and has exhibited with the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts; his work is held in the collections of both the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the Aigantighe Art Museum in Timaru.²⁹ Tony now resides in Wellington where he has a successful studio at Miramar.

When Tony departed Inglewood to teach glassblowing at Whanganui Polytechnic, the studio remained vacant for a short period, before being taken over by Chuck Simpson and his partner Lesley Justin, who relocated to Inglewood from Australia.³⁰ Chuck and Lesley operated the glass studio until February 1991 when they returned to Australia.³¹ On Chuck and Lesley's departure, the church was purchased by one of Chuck's employees, Andrew Williams, who resided in the church with his wife Stephanie and their two young children.³² The Williams' completed renovations costing about \$10,000, before reopening the studio under the name 'Glass Art' on the 2nd of March 1991.³³ Following the closure of the glass studio the building once again reverted to a place of worship, with the Lifegate Inglewood Apostolic Church having now occupied the building for some years.³⁴

Reference Sources

See footnotes.

²⁶ Inglewood, New Plymouth, April 1951, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, Whites Aviation Collection, Ref: WA-27606-G; View over the town of Inglewood to farmland and Mount Taranaki beyond, New Plymouth District, Taranaki Region, 16 Sep 1958, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, Whites Aviation Collection, Ref: WA-47806-F

²⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 21 January 1975, page 15

²⁸ *The Daily News*, 20 March 1974, page 5

²⁹ New Zealand Glassworks, 'Tony Kuepfer', *New Zealand Glassworks*, <https://www.nzglassworks.com>; accessed 5 February 2019.

³⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 3 December 1988, page 3

³¹ *North Taranaki Midweek*, 27 February 1991, page 1

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Lifegate Inglewood Apostolic Church, 'About Us', *Lifegate Inglewood Apostolic Church*, <https://www.lifegate.org.nz>; accessed 5 February 2019.

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Description

The former Knox Church is located on the eastern side of Cutfield Street, just off Matai Street, in central Inglewood. It is one of a number of older buildings which give central Inglewood a special historic character, of which a significant number are associated with architect Frank Messenger and his subsequent partnerships. To the immediate south of the church, on the same property title, is a slender gabled structure with rear lean-to constructed about 1975 as a glass blowing workshop. The main church building is composed of two distinct sections; the original 1902 church at rear (later the church hall) and the 1926-27 second church at front. Contrasting ecclesiastical styles of similar scale, the building clearly illustrates the development of church architecture in small-town New Zealand during the early decades of the twentieth century.

The 1902 church is comprised of a steeply pitched timber-framed structure on a roughly east-west orientation. The walls are clad in horizontal rusticated weatherboard and the roof sheathed in mild corrugated steel. The windows are principally gothic revival style three-pointed single-hung sashes. On the northern side elevation, the relocated original gabled front entrance porch projects from the western end of the structure. A three-pointed sash is fitted to the northern wall, whilst a later ledged and braced tongue and groove panelled door is fitted to the western wall. The porch is in a visibly poor state of repair compared to the rest of the building. A regular row of three sashes are fitted to the main northern elevation, whilst a further sash, possibly relocated from the southern elevation, is fitted beneath a small porch which incorporates an old timber door with arched panels. The regularity of the southern elevation is interrupted by the attached glass blowing workshop and has resulted in the loss of some of the original sashes on this elevation. At the rear of the structure a low gabled addition incorporates 1950s style timber casements.

The main form of the 1926-27 church is a steeply pitched cross-gabled structure (nave with central transept) of reinforced concrete; in combination with the contiguous social hall the building forms a Latin cross. The walls are finished with plain painted plaster and the roof sheathed in mild corrugated steel. The main front elevation faces roughly west into Cutfield Street, with the building constructed close to the property boundary. A central gabled entrance porch projects forward and incorporates a pair of tongue and groove panelled doors, with pointed patterned glass lead-light transom window above. The arrangement is finished with a pointed label stopped at either end, with the porch gable rising to a parapet with moulded copings and simple moulded kneelers either side. The porch is flanked by two timber lancets incorporating hinged windows disguised as sashes; these are glazed with small leaded squares of patterned glass. The lancets are finished with pointed labels stopped at either end, whilst a moulded string course (which also functions as a windowsill) extends from the porch and continues along the adjacent elevations. The upper gable end incorporates a central louvred ventilator with arched label stopped at either end, parapet with stepped apex, moulded copings and simple moulded kneelers.

The northern and southern transept elevations are almost identical, the central feature being an intersecting timber tracery window flanked by two lancets. Utilising simple Y-tracery, the central window incorporates three lancets and three tracery lights, each glazed with small leaded squares of purple patterned glass. The two timber lancets are identical to those on the front elevation, incorporating hinged windows disguised as sashes and glazed with small leaded squares of patterned purple glass a continuous three-pointed arched label, stopped at either end, completes the arrangement. The upper gable end incorporates a central louvred ventilator with arched label stopped at either end, parapet with stepped apex, moulded copings and simple moulded kneelers.



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Assessment:

Historical	The former Knox Church has historic significance as the home of the Inglewood Presbyterian Church for a period of almost 70 years from 1902 until 1970. The building is associated with noted New Plymouth architects James Sanderson and the firm of Messenger, Griffiths and Taylor; both of whom contributed significantly to the built environment of North Taranaki during the early twentieth century. The more recent occupation of the building by skilled glass-blowing artisans, most notably Tony Kuepfer, is also significant.	✓
Importance to Community	Both as a former place of worship and as a well-known glass-blowing studio, the building is an important element in the community's consciousness.	✓
Architecture & Construction	An interesting composition of two ecclesiastical styles, the building clearly illustrates the development of ecclesiastical architecture in small-town New Zealand during the early decades of the twentieth century.	✓
Setting and Context	Located close to the street frontage, this building contributes positively to the surrounding streetscape. It is one of a number of older buildings which give central Inglewood a special historic character, of which a significant number are associated with architect Frank Messenger and his subsequent partnerships.	✓
Archaeology	-	
Representativeness, rarity and integrity	Whilst additions have been completed at the rear and southern elevations, the main structure has been little altered since 1926-27, and much of the building still retains a high degree of external integrity.	✓
Meets threshold for listing (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓