

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME 'Temuka Type' Open-Air Classroom
ADDRESS Temuka Primary School, 2 Wilkin Street, Temuka

PHOTOGRAPH



(www)

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

LEGAL DESCRIPTION RES 1819

VALUATION NUMBER 2478012200

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1926

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** George Penlington, Canterbury Education Board
architect; Robert Jamieson, builder

STYLE 'Temuka type' classroom bungalow

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with L-shaped footprint and hipped roof with gabled porch. Grouped multi-paned casement windows, including panel of Whitney windows on principal elevation. Three doors located on north-west elevation are accessed via concrete steps. Corbelled chimney.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Timber framing and weatherboard cladding, brick & corrugated iron.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Shelter shed / porch enclosed, classroom doors replaced (date unknown).

SETTING

The building stands on the north side of Domain Avenue within the ground of Temuka Primary School. The property is bounded by Wilkin Street to the west and Hayhurst Street to the east; the partially formed Rayner Street runs through the school grounds. Temuka Domain is on the opposite side of Domain Avenue, with the town centre to the west of the site over the railway line. The extent of scheduling is limited to the immediate environs of the classroom building, rather than the land parcel as a whole.

HISTORY

The first school built in Temuka opened in 1873. Ten years later it was replaced by a brick building, which housed both primary and secondary divisions. In 1903 some 200 boys and 150 girls were receiving their education in the school's seven large classrooms. Around 1905 a new high school block and a technical building were erected, followed by a stand-alone open-air classroom in 1926. Miss V Elder was headmistress of the infant (primary) school of Temuka District High at the time; she was a keen supporter of open- or fresh-air classrooms after hearing about them at a teachers' refresher course in Dunedin. A photograph of the opening of the new school building was published in the *Auckland Weekly News* in September 1926 and the 'Temuka type' classroom subsequently became a model for other Canterbury schools to follow. The high school shared the site with the primary school until 1968. Today Temuka Primary School is a Year 1 to 6 school with a roll of around 230 students. The 1926 open-air classroom building remains in use on the site.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The 'Temuka type' open-air classroom at Temuka Primary School has historical and social significance for its association with the development of the open-air classroom, the influential Open-Air Schools' League (OASL) founded by Professor James Shelley and others in Christchurch in 1924 and, more generally, the Temuka community and past teachers and pupils of the school.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The 'Temuka type' open-air classroom at Temuka Primary School has cultural significance as a demonstration of inter-war educational philosophy and practices. The design was intended to create a healthy and constructive learning environment for children at a time when older educational buildings and practices were being challenged as outdated and unhygienic.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The 'Temuka type' open-air classroom at Temuka Primary School has high architectural significance as an exemplar open-air classroom design by Canterbury Education Board architect George Penlington. Penlington (1865-1932) was born and educated in Akaroa before training in the Public Works Department and joining the Canterbury Education Board as a draughtsman in 1900. In 1904 he was appointed architect, remaining in that position until his retirement in 1931. Penlington is best known for his design of the Christchurch Teachers' College (Peterborough Centre, 1924-30) and Hagley High School (1924); some of his masonry schools were demolished following the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes. In the later 1920s Penlington designed buildings in timber, largely for financial reasons, although the 1931 Hawkes' Bay earthquake was to validate the structural wisdom in doing so. The 1926 Temuka classroom building was Penlington's response to the OASL's open-air classroom, first introduced at Fendalton Primary School in 1924. The 'Temuka type' was then replicated at other Canterbury schools during a period when the two open-air classroom models (Fendalton & Temuka) were pitted against each other in discussions about modern school design in Canterbury. The OASL criticised the Temuka type for 'watering down' the Fendalton model, whereas supporters considered the Temuka type to be more flexible and workable in its design.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The 'Temuka type' open-air classroom at Temuka Primary School has craftsmanship value for the quality of its timber construction and detailing. Robert Jamieson was a local builder with premises in Seddon Street. He also built a grain store for the Temuka Flourmilling Company in 1927.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The 'Temuka type' open-air classroom at Temuka Primary School has contextual significance as a local historic feature within the grounds of Temuka Primary School. It is also significant for its relationship to the other Canterbury classroom buildings that adopted its design, including those at Leeston (1928), Linwood Avenue in Christchurch (1929), Clandeboye (1929), and Winchester (1930).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the school building post-dates 1900 and the portion of the school property between Wilkin and Rayner Streets was only acquired for educational purposes in 1920 (SO 5682), its site may have limited potential archaeological values.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The 'Temuka type' open-air classroom at Temuka Primary School has overall significance to Temuka and Timaru district as a whole. The building has historical and social significance for its association with the development of the open-air classroom and past teachers and pupils of the school and cultural significance as a demonstration of the educational philosophy that led to the development of the open-air classroom type in the 1920s. The 'Temuka type' open-air classroom at Temuka Primary School has high architectural significance for its design by George Penlington and craftsmanship value for its timber construction and detailing by local builder Robert Jamieson. The 'Temuka type' open-air classroom at Temuka Primary School has contextual significance as a historic feature within the school campus and in relation to other 'Temuka type' school buildings in Canterbury. As the school building post-dates 1900 its site may have limited potential archaeological values.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Temuka Leader* 25 November 1924, p. 1; 4 April 1925, p. 2; 22 October 1925, p. 3; 2 March 1926, p. 2; 5 July 1930, p. 2.
- *Ellesmere Guardian* 13 July 1928, p. 5; 20 July 1928, p. 6; 18 December 1928, p. 5.
- *Auckland Weekly News* 23 September 1926, p. 43.
- *Press* 16 February 1927, p. 5; 7 November 1927, p. 7; 22 November 1927, p. 12; 7 April 1928, p. 17; 23 August 1930, p. 14.
- *Patea Mail* 8 February 1929, p. 4.
- Archives New Zealand.
- MN Williams 'Building Yesterday's Schools: An Analysis of Educational Architectural Design as Practised by the Building Department of the Canterbury Education Board from 1916-1989' University of Canterbury, Christchurch, 2014.
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- <https://www.temukaprimary.school.nz>
- <https://districtplan.ccc.govt.nz/Images/DistrictPlanImages/Statement%20of%20Significance/Christchurch/HID%20129.pdf>



Extent of scheduling, limited to immediate setting of the building, 2 Wilkin Street, Temuka.

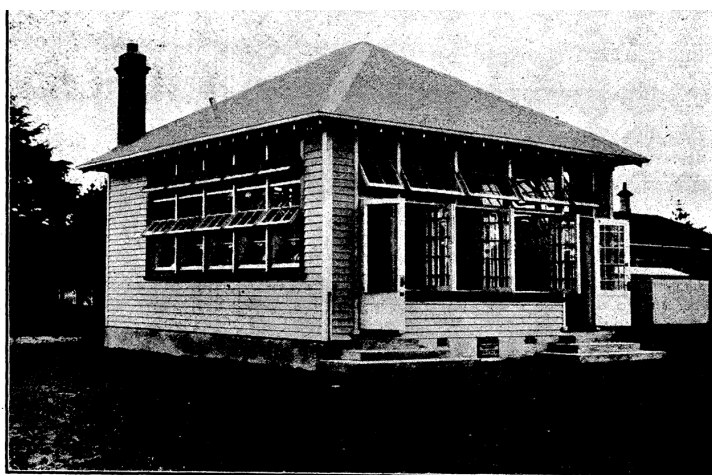


CARE OF SCHOOLCHILDREN'S HEALTH AT TEMUKA, CANTERBURY: NEW FRESH AIR CLASS-ROOM OPENED LAST WEEK.

A general view of the ceremony, showing the new building, with Mr. T. D. Burnett, M.P., addressing the gathering.

—D. White.

'Care of Schoolchildren's Health at Temuka, Canterbury: New Fresh Air Class-Room Opened Last Week' *Auckland Weekly News* 23 September 1926, p. 43; AWNS-19260923-43-1, Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries.



TEMUKA TYPE

Ellesmere Guardian 13 July 1928, p. 5. PapersPast.