

**TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** Caroline Bay Soundshell  
**ADDRESS** Evans Street, Caroline Bay, Timaru  
**PHOTOGRAPH**



(Dr A McEwan, 15 April 2019)

**FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO.** No. 14      **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** n / a  
(at time of assessment)

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** Pt Lot 1 DP 22231

**VALUATION NUMBER** 2500084200A

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1936

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** Victor Panton, architect; W Hayes, builder

**STYLE** Art Deco

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Semi-circular soundshell shelters south-west facing stage. Single-storey section at rear has lean-to roof and side walls extended to form a parapet. Casement windows and timber steps to rear door. Small clock tower atop stage arch. Concrete auditorium seating. Soundshell ceiling is striped and side walls have ornamental bands.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Steel plating, cement plaster stucco, concrete.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Concrete auditorium seating erected (1957). Stage canopy addition (date unknown).

**SETTING**

The soundshell is located within the grounds of Caroline Bay, north of the railway line that runs below the terrace bordered by SH1 and The Bay Hill. A number of other buildings and structures relating to the development and use of Caroline Bay are located nearby, including the Caroline Bay Tearooms (1931, heritage item # 13) and Hall (1924 +). The extent of scheduling is limited to the immediate setting of the soundshell, its stage and auditorium seating, notwithstanding the potential built heritage values of the land parcel as a whole.

**HISTORY**

Timaru's Caroline Bay was developed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as a public pleasure ground. Previously, in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, the town's rocky coastline was encircled by railway line with saltwater swimming baths beneath Le Cren's Terrace. Harbour works, including the completion of the north mole in 1890, brought about an accumulation of sand in the bay and thus facilitated its development for recreational use. The Timaru Borough Council and the Beautifying Association erected a band rotunda, caretaker's cottage and tearooms to enhance the amenities of Caroline Bay in 1904-5. The Caroline Bay Association was established in 1911 and it subsequently spear-headed improvements at the bay. These included extending the tearooms, constructing the Bay Hall and replacing the band rotunda with a soundshell in late 1936. The new 'acoustic pavilion' was handed over by the Association to Mayor Vinell on behalf of the people of Timaru in December 1936. Since that time the sound shell has been the venue for dozens of entertainment events, including the hugely popular Miss Caroline Bay contests as part of the annual Caroline Bay Carnival. Stadium seating was erected in the late 1950s, previously attendees at concerts etc at the soundshell gathered on the flat ground in front of the stage or witnessed events from the terrace above the bay. The soundshell was the backdrop for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Timaru on 22 March 1977. It remains an integral part of the recreational facilities at Caroline Bay.

### **HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Caroline Bay Soundshell has historical and social significance for its association with the development of Caroline Bay, the Caroline Bay Association and, more generally, the development of Timaru as a seaside resort town.

### **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Caroline Bay Soundshell has cultural value as a site of community identity and historic continuity since 1936.

### **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The Caroline Bay Soundshell has architectural significance as the work of second-generation Timaru architect Victor Panton. Panton (c.1887-1946) joined his father Walter in practice in 1909 and father and son registered as architects in 1914. The practice, known as Walter Panton & Son, was also responsible for the former Public Trust Office in Sophia Street (1922-23, heritage items # 32). Victor Panton added the clocktower to the Timaru Public Library and Borough Council Offices (heritage item # 48) in 1933-34; Walter Panton & Son having been responsible for the building in the period 1908-12.

### **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

The Caroline Bay Soundshell has craftsmanship value as an example of inter-war construction.

### **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Caroline Bay Soundshell has contextual significance as a local historic feature within the larger setting of Caroline Bay. The stadium seating was erected in 1957 (GS Powell, Consulting Engineer; Hayes & Porter Ltd, Contractors).

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

As the building post-dates 1900 and the sandy bay did not 'exist' before 1890, its site is unlikely to have notable archaeological values.

### **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The Caroline Bay Soundshell has overall heritage significance to Timaru and the district as a whole. The building has historical and social significance for its association with the development of Caroline Bay as a recreational ground and the Caroline Bay Association's efforts to enhance the amenities of the bay. The Caroline Bay Soundshell has cultural value as a site of community identity and historic continuity and architectural significance as an Art Deco style recreational building designed by local architect Victor Panton. The Caroline Bay Soundshell has craftsmanship value for its inter-war construction and detailing and contextual significance as one of Caroline Bay's historic architectural features. Given the age of the building and the nature of its location the site has limited potential archaeological significance.

## HERITAGE CATEGORY

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## REFERENCES

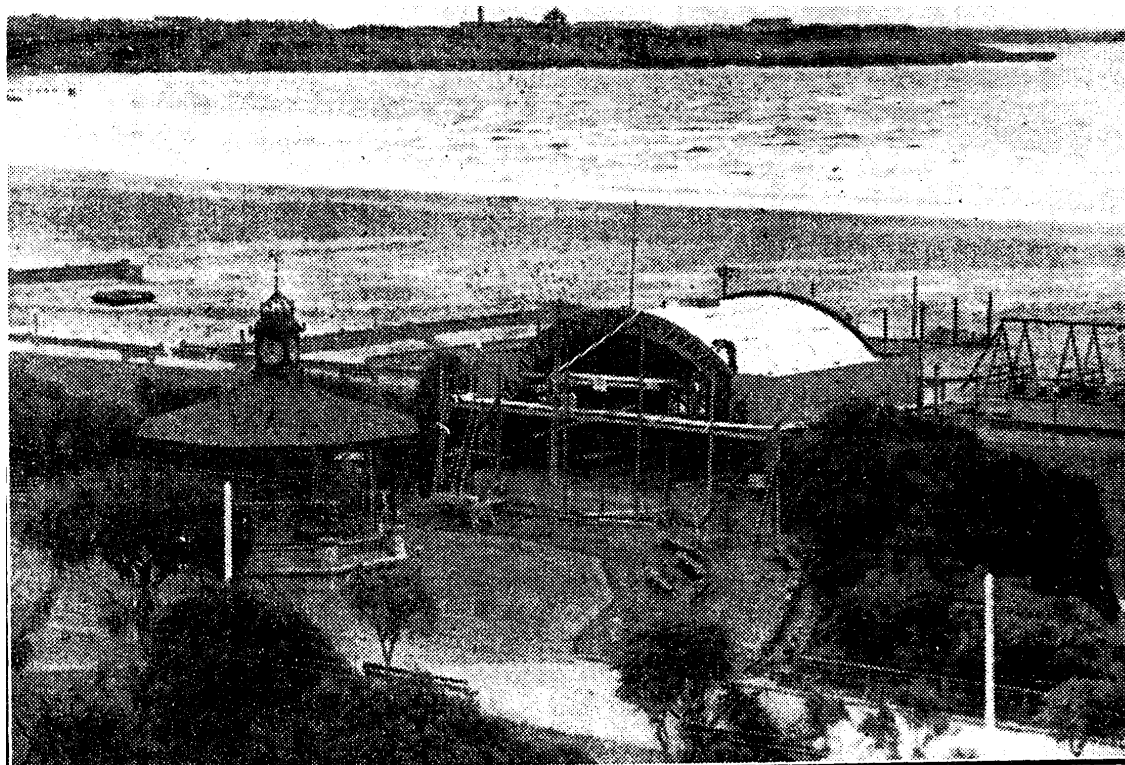
- *Timaru Herald* 11 February 2018 (available online).
- *Otago Daily Times* 11 February 1926, p. 7; 10 June 1936, p. 8; 1 October 1936, p. 13.
- *Press* 27 August 1929, p. 5; 26 December 1933, p. 5; 17 March 1936, p. 6; 25 August 1936, p. 5; 11 November 1936, p. 7; 19 November 1936, pp. 7 & 16; 21 December 1936, p. 5; 24 February 1937, p. 4; 27 September 1945, p. 7.
- *Evening Star* 27 October 1936, p. 9.
- <http://www.carolinebay.org.nz>



Extent of scheduling, limited to immediate setting of soundshell and its seating, Caroline Bay, Timaru.



Land parcel as a whole, soundshell marked by star.



Soundshell in course of construction. *Press* 19 November 1936, p. 16. PapersPast.