

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME St Mary's Hall
ADDRESS 24 Church Street, Timaru

PHOTOGRAPH



(Dr A McEwan, 9 July 2018)

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

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 3 DP 1739

VALUATION NUMBER 2500054900

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1928-29

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Turnbull & Rule, architects; JT Hunt, contractor

STYLE Collegiate Gothic

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-storey building with trapezoidal footprint and gabled roof. Symmetrical façade with central entry beneath oriel window and pediment breaking through castellated parapet. Multi-pane casement windows, string course above first floor windows, incised oval motifs between ground and first floor windows; name of building in relief above oriel window. Shallow lancet arched entrance flanked by lamps fixed to framing buttresses. East elevation also finished with cement plaster; has string course and decorative parapet. Fire escape stairs and secondary external entries on east elevation. Rear lean-to section designed to fit irregular shape of lot.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Concrete, cement plaster, timber, corrugated metal.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Unknown, if any.

SETTING

The church hall occupies the full extent of its site on the south side of Church Street, between Bank Street in the west and Sophia Street in the west. St Mary's Church (heritage item #50) is located to the east on Church Street, separated from the hall by a right of way. The extent of setting is the land parcel on which the hall is located.

HISTORY

Prior to Timaru's establishment as a town, Bishop Harper visited South Canterbury from Christchurch and conducted services in several homesteads and, in 1858, at Timaru. In 1859, the Anglican Church posted George Foster to Timaru with responsibility for all of South Canterbury. The following year the foundation stone of the first St Mary's Church was laid. It was dedicated on 28 April 1861 and the church was enlarged in 1868. The foundation stone of a new stone church was laid in September 1880; the partially completed church was consecrated on 26 August 1886. Between 1907 and 1909 the church was completed; it reopened on 6 May 1909. Besides the church, the parish built a two-storey brick vicarage on Theodosia Street, behind which was a wooden Sunday school room which could seat around 500 people. A new, larger Sunday school opened beside the church on 7 September 1929; the foundation stone having been laid on 25 November 1928. Dean Julius, the former vicar of St Mary's, opened the hall. The site had been purchased by the church in 1925 and was previously privately owned. The earlier hall was subsequently demolished. The new parish hall was designed to house, on the ground floor, the vicar's office, Sunday School library, a Guild Room, hall with stage and wall panels to create nine small Sunday School classrooms, and a kitchen. A basement was to be used by the Boy Scouts and on the first floor an infants' department and women's clubroom were provided for. St Mary's Anglican Church closed in January 2018 for strengthening and conservation; church services are currently being held in the hall until the refurbishment has been completed.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

St Mary's Hall has historical and social significance as a place of Anglican education, administration and socialising since 1929.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

St Mary's Hall has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of the church community and the varied activities in which its members have been involved.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

St Mary's Hall has architectural significance as the work of Timaru architectural practice, Turnbull and Rule. Timaru-born James Turnbull (1864-1947) trained in Melbourne and then established a practice in Timaru in c.1895. The son of Richard Turnbull, a prominent Timaru businessman and politician, Turnbull also designed Job Brown's Beehive Stores (heritage item #117, 1901-2) in Temuka, Chalmers Church (heritage item #38, 1903-4) and a large number of Timaru houses. Turnbull went into partnership with Percy Watts Rule in c.1920, after which time Rule was the principal designer in the firm. The firm designed the Temuka Library (heritage item #118, 1926-27), St James' Anglican Church at Franz Josef (1928-31) and the 1930 additions to the Bank Street Methodist Church (heritage item #51). Rule was awarded a Gold Medal from the NZ Institute of Architects for his design of the Surgical Wing at Timaru Hospital (1936-40) in 1939. The Collegiate Gothic style was popular between the world wars, particularly for educational buildings associated with the Anglican church.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

St Mary's Hall has technological and craftsmanship significance as a reinforced concrete building with cement plaster detailing. John Thomas Hunt (1880-1966) was the son of Timaru builder William Henry Hunt, who was in partnership with William Werry from 1895. Werry and Hunt erected a number of commercial buildings in central Timaru as well as undertaking extensive water-race construction in the North Island.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

St Mary's Hall has contextual significance as a local historic feature and for its relationship with St Mary's Anglican Church.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the hall post-dates 1900 and covers all of the land parcel on which it is located, its site probably has limited potential archaeological significance. The site may have previously been vacant, judging from a 1909 photograph in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

St Mary's Hall has overall heritage significance to Timaru and Timaru district as a whole. The church hall has historical and social significance for its 90-year association with the congregation of St Mary's Anglican Church and cultural value as a place of Christian education and fellowship. St Mary's Hall has architectural significance as a Collegiate Gothic style building designed by local architects Turnbull and Rule and technological and craftsmanship significance for its concrete construction and detailing. St Mary's Hall has contextual significance as a local historic feature and for its relationship to St Mary's Anglican Church. The site of St Mary's Hall is likely to have limited potential archaeological significance in view of the building's complete coverage of the site and post-1900 development.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 12 November 2016 (available online).
- *Press* 29 August 1927, p. 2; 13 December 1927, p. 10; 14 December 1927, p. 4; 3 September 1929, p. 6; 8 October 1929, p. 4.
- *The Courier* 25 January 2018 (available online).
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/328>
- <https://www.stmarystimaru.co.nz>

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AUTHOR	Dr Ann McEwan / Heritage Consultancy Services
REPORT UPDATED	XX
AUTHOR	XX
PEER REVIEWED	XX
REVIEWER	XX



Extent of setting, 24 Church Street, Timaru.