

KIMBOLTON PUBLIC LIBRARY – 5 Edwards Street, Kimbolton



Architect: -

Construction date: circa 1903

Visible materials: Timber cladding & joinery, corrugated steel roofing

Architectural style: Victorian Georgian box cottage

Use/building type: Residential/community

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2015

Heritage New Zealand listing:

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹

Outline history

The Kimbolton library was established in 1891 when it was housed in private homes. In 1927 the library was housed in this cottage when James L Rained occupied it. The cottage first appeared on the rating roll in 1903/04 in the name of Robert MClymont, but may be older. From 1927 the library stayed in the cottage and became the “Public Library”. Rev J F Mayo is believed to have paid the rates on the building from 1927 and in 1936 he gained the title to it. He later gifted the property to the KIWITEA COUNTY COUNCIL LIBRARY COMMITTEE. Today it is looked after by the Kimbolton Community Committee.

Advertisements for annual meetings of subscribers to the library appeared in the Feilding Star between 1901 and 1911². These were signed by W M Morton. In May 22, 1911 the Kimbolton Library

1 Former NZHPT Manawatu Branch Committee files

2 <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=FS19030121.2.34&srpos=1&e=-----10--1----2kimbolton+library-->

Committee was given approval to erect a sign³. This may have been the result of the AGM when “an effort is being made to infuse new life into the Kimbolton Library. Mr Clark has kindly offered to take charge of the books, and this enable subscribers to obtain them at reasonable hours.”⁴

Brief History of New Zealand Libraries⁵

The origins of Wellington Public Library⁶ began in 1840 when Dr Frederick Knox was appointed Librarian. Various libraries opened and closed between the 1840s and 1869 when the Public Library Act was passed. The *Port Nicholson Exchange and Public Library* opened in a raupo hut at the foot of Charlotte (now Molesworth) Street in 1841, which closed a year later. The hut was sold to the *Mechanic’s Institute* to which the books were presented. The library was known as the *Port Nicholson Mechanics’ Institute, Public School and Library*. This closed in 1843. In 1850 the *Wellington Athenaeum and Mechanics’ Institute* opened near Plimmer’s Steps in a small house and was operated by the *Athenaeum*.

In 1874 a petition requesting a free public library was presented to the Wellington City Council but it was not until 1888 when the first public library opened in Adelaide Road, Newtown. Meanwhile, from 1877 the *Athenaeum* library continued operating from a building in Lambton Quay.

In 1890 Mr W H Levin, a local merchant, offered a monetary gift to construct a public library for the city. In 1892, the *Athenaeum* offered their stock of books for purchase by the Council, which was accepted and in the following year, the Wellington City Council opened the City’s first public library building on the corner of Mercer and Wakefield Streets. In 1904 the Newtown branch library was opened and in the following years additional branch libraries were opened in Brooklyn (1905), Karori (1920), Ngaio (1930), Wadestown (1932), Miramar (1933), Lyall Bay (1936), Khandallah (1947), Island Bay (1953).

The origins of Auckland Libraries⁷ also began in the 1840s with the Mechanic’s Institute opening their library in 1882. In 1872 Sir George Grey offered books to establish a public library, which he fulfilled in 1882, following the opening of the Auckland Free Public Library in 1880. As with Wellington, the City took over the Mechanic’s Institute collection and building and the Auckland Provincial Council library collection was also incorporated into the new City Library’s collection. The books could be used in the premises only.

3 <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=FS19110522.2.27&srpos=11&e=----10--11----2kimbolton+library-->

4 <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=FS19110522.2.27&srpos=11&e=----10--11----2kimbolton+library-->

5 the information for this brief outline was summarised from <http://www.nzmuseums.co.nz> , Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, editor MacIntlock and, Keith Thompson, Art Galleries and Museums of New Zealand, Reed 1981

6 information taken from <http://www.wcl.govt.nz/about/branches/history.html> ,

7 information taken from <http://www.aucklandlibrary.co.nz/process.asp?pageurl=/explore/aboutaz/ABhistory.html>

In 1887, the library opened in new premises on the corner of Wellesley Street East and Kitchener Street and subscribers could use the service. In 1946 the subscription charge was removed and use of the library was free to all residents and ratepayers.

*“The library service soon moved out into the suburbs. The Leys Institute library opened on 29 March 1905, the now closed Grafton branch opened on 19 March 1913 and the first Parnell branch on 13 December 1913. The award winning Remuera branch opened on 2 October 1915 and the first Epsom branch on 27 August 1918. Grey Lynn followed on 13 December 1924 and Point Chevalier on 20 November 1926. On 13 June 1931 the Tamaki or Saint Heliers branch opened and 2 weeks later the first Avondale branch. The next wasn't until 17 March 1966 with the Glen Innes branch. Libraries at Mount Albert and Mount Roskill came in the 1970's. Amalgamation in 1989 brought in libraries at Onehunga, Otahuhu, Mount Wellington and Waiheke”.*⁸

In 1859 the Christchurch library too began as a Mechanics' Institute⁹. Four years later it moved to a building on the corner of Hereford Street and Cambridge Terrace where the library remained until 1982. In 1873 the building was handed over to the Provincial Council, which placed the library under the control of the new Canterbury College (later the University of Canterbury). With the abolition of the provinces in 1876, the library became the property of the college. In 1936 the City Council agreed, in principle, to take over the library, which it did in 1948 by Act of Parliament.

By the 1960's community libraries had been established and further libraries were added when those of the Waimairi District Council and Paparua County Council combined with Christchurch City following amalgamation in 1989. The new organisation became the Canterbury Public Library network. In 2000 Canterbury Public Library changed its name to Christchurch City Libraries.

The Dunedin City library comprises a number of small community libraries.¹⁰ The Blueskin Library in Waitati opened in the school house in 1871. It moved to a separate building in 1903, and to the public hall in 1972 and into new premises in 1992.

The Mosgiel Library was established in 1881 by the Athenaeum Committee. A new library administered by the Mosgiel Borough Council was opened in 1959. The library moved to its present site in 1979, and was redeveloped and expanded in 1994.

The Port Chalmers Library was set up by the Mechanic's Institute in 1864 and run under the auspices of the Port Chalmers Borough from 1943.

The Waikouaiti Library was founded in 1862, and later became a part of the Mechanics Hall. It moved into the War Memorial building in the mid 1970s, and during these years became part of the Waikouaiti Borough. The war Memorial Building was demolished in 1995 to make way for a purpose-built library on the same site, which opened in February 1996.

8 <http://www.aucklandlibrary.co.nz/process.asp?pageurl=/explore/aboutaz/ABhistory.html>

9 information taken from <http://library.christchurch.org.nz/>

10 information taken from <http://www.cityofdunedin.com/city/?page=council>

The Nelson library service celebrated its 150th birthday on 27 September 1992. It is thought that this makes it New Zealand's oldest library¹¹. Its origins date back as far as 1841 on the ship Whitby when the Nelson Literary and Scientific Institute was formed. Their first reading room was opened in September 1842. The Council took over the library system in 1965.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The tiny single storey timber framed cottage is designed in the Victorian Georgian Box Cottage style, a vernacular carpenter response to limited budget accommodation, using readily available materials, using styles from England. Cottages could be increased in size by adding lean-to, 'saltbox', or double gables located parallel to each other. Key characteristics of the style include symmetry, medium pitched roofs, close eaves, boxed eaves, a verandah and small paned or large paned sash windows.

The building appears to be one room with a central, panelled and glazed door with double sash windows either side. Cladding is rusticated weatherboards to the street front and sides with cement sheet boarding to the rear. The roof is a simple gable roof parallel to the road. A verandah extends the full width of the cottage and has a slightly concave roof with an open cheek on the east side and a timber valence with vertical boarding on the opposite cheek.

No plans of the building have been sighted and the interior was not inspected.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2015 for this building is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The building has **moderate** to **high regional** significance for **architectural, rarity, representivity, authenticity, people, group, public esteem, pattern** and **educational** heritage values.

The cottage has **high architectural** and **representative** values as an example of the Georgian Box Cottage with many of the characteristics of the style including symmetry, medium pitched gable roof, close eaves and verandah and large paned sash windows.

The cottage has **moderate rarity** value as a building type in the Manawatu area.

The cottage has **moderate authenticity** with the possibility of a lean-to having been removed and new cladding applied.

The building has **high group** and **public esteem** values being one of a number of significant historic buildings in the small Kimbolton township. The heritage values are noted in the Kimbolton Community Plan as being of importance to the local community.

The cottage has **moderate associative** values with the Kimbolton Library Committee and subsequent organisations established to run the library.

11 Information taken from <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz/library.htm>

The house has **moderate pattern** and **educational** values as a building used for a highly valued public service and established by a local organisation.

SOURCES

Former NZHPT Manawatu Branch Committee files

Paperspast

Signboard on the building