

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

2021 District Plan Item No. HH108
HERITAGE ITEM NAME Swannanoa Wesleyan Methodist Church / Swannanoa Community Church
ADDRESS 1299/1303 Tram Road, Swannanoa

PHOTOGRAPH



(Dr A McEwan, 10 July 2019)

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

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Part RS 8183

VALUATION NUMBER 2175052800

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1873

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** John Rutland, architect; James Barker, builder

STYLE Colonial Gothic Revival

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with rectangular footprint and gabled roof forms. Lower-level entrance porch and vestry at west end and on north side near north-east corner respectively. Lancet-arched door openings, square-headed nave fenestration. Timber traceried window at east end and two small lancet windows in west wall of entrance porch.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Cement stucco, timber, corrugated metal.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Stucco cladding (c.1960?).

SETTING

The church is on the south side of Tram Road, west of its intersection with Tupelo Place and east of the intersection with Two Chain Road. A cemetery is to the rear (south) of the church. Aside from the Swannanoa Preschool and Swannanoa School, located on the western boundary of the church property, the wider setting is largely rural residential in nature. The extent of setting is the land parcel on which the church and cemetery are located and includes the 1973 centennial gates.

HISTORY

A Wesleyan Methodist church at Swannanoa was opened by the Rev J Buller on 23 November 1873. The land had been gifted by Bransby White of Octon Grange Farm and liberally supported by local settler John Evans Brown and the Peacock family to whom he was related. At the time of the church's opening it was proposed to set aside a portion of the church grounds for use as a public cemetery. Swannanoa has been part of both the Rangiora Wesleyan Circuit and the Kaiapoi Methodist Circuit over the years. Centennial celebrations were held at the church on 25 November 1973 and memorial gates and fencing were installed at that time. Services were held intermittently after a period of closure in the 1950s. By the late 1970s only a Christmas Eve service was being held, although burials in the cemetery have continued through the years.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Swannanoa Community Church has historical and social significance for its association with the Methodist congregation of Swannanoa and the history of the church community since 1873.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Swannanoa Community Church has cultural and spiritual significance as a place of Methodist worship and fellowship. The church centennial fence has commemorative value as a memorial to JR Paterson.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Swannanoa Community Church has architectural significance as the work of Christchurch architect-builder John Rutland. Rutland (1825-97) was a member of the Methodist church and gave his services free to the Swannanoa church. He also designed the Wesleyan Methodist Church in St Albans, Christchurch (1869), Holy Trinity Methodist Church in Rangiora (1875), and his own home in Papanui Road (c.1890), which is now the boarding hostel for Christchurch Girls' High School.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The Swannanoa Community Church has technological and craftsmanship value for the evidence it provides of Victorian construction methods and materials. James Barker appears to have been a Rangiora builder.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Swannanoa Community Church has contextual significance as a historic feature in Swannanoa and for its relationship with a historic cemetery on the same site.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the church pre-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological value relating to the colonial development of the property by the Methodist church.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Swannanoa Wesleyan Methodist Church / Swannanoa Community Church has overall heritage significance to Swannanoa and Waimakariri district as a whole. The building has historic and social significance for its association with the Methodist congregation of Swannanoa since 1873 and cultural and spiritual significance for its religious use and purpose. The Swannanoa Community Church has architectural significance as a simple Colonial Gothic Revival style church designed by Christchurch architect-builder John Rutland and technological and craftsmanship value for the evidence it provides of Victorian timber

construction and detailing. The Swannanoa Community Church has contextual significance as a historic feature in Swannanoa and for its relationship to the cemetery on the same site. The church property has potential archaeological value in view of its development and use since 1873.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Press* 12 August 1872, p. 3; 1 December 1873, p. 3; 14 July 1925, p. 15; 25 November 1937, p. 4.
- *North Canterbury Gazette* 30 July 1937, p. 5; 26 October 1937, p. 4.
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- <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc03Cycl-t1-body1-d4-d21.html>
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- <https://libraries.waimakariri.govt.nz/heritage/local-history/places-of-the-waimakariri/rangiora/history-of-the-churches-in-rangiora,-southbrook-and-fernside>

REPORT COMPLETED

24 July 2019

AUTHOR

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Extent of setting, 1299/1303 Tram Road, Swannanoa.