

Heritage Buildings Report

Site ID

Building/Site Name

Carr Residence

Address

17 Barrett Street, New Plymouth



Statement of Significance

Constructed during 1912, this attractive house was designed by noted New Plymouth architect Frank Messenger for dentist Augustus Charles Hugh Collins. The property was acquired by accountant Edward Carr in 1941, with the Carr family still in possession of the property almost eighty years later in 2019. The principal significance of this building is as a very early example of a New Plymouth dwelling with overt bungalow features, including asymmetrical planning, wide low-pitched gables, window hoods, and exposed rafters. The exterior of the house retains a relatively high degree of integrity, with many original features surviving intact. Well-maintained and prominently positioned on its section, the house makes a strong positive contribution to the local streetscape.



Heritage Buildings Report

Legal Information and Heritage Status

Legal Description Section 557 Town of New Plymouth

District Plan Item/ Map No.

Heritage New Zealand List Not listed

Construction Information

Date of Construction 1912

Principal Materials Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel

Construction Professionals Frank Messenger (architect)

History

Early Section History

Town Section 557 was one of the original New Plymouth Town Sections laid out by surveyor Frederick Alonzo Carrington in 1841. The section, along with many others in the surrounding area, were gazetted as Education Reserves in the mid-nineteenth century and originally administered by the Taranaki Education Board.¹ With the passing of the Education Act at the end of 1877, a separate board of commissioners, the Taranaki School Commissioners, was established to administer leases for Education Reserves in the District.²

Generally leased for terms of 21 years, by the late-nineteenth century the block bounded by Barrett Street, Standish Street, Stoke Street and Wallace Place (including Section 557) was leased by John Veale, presumably for grazing.³ In September 1907, the leases for Sections 554-557 and 580-581 were purchased at auction by Charles Clarke.⁴ Clarke held the lease for Section 557 until March 1910, when at the monthly meeting of the Taranaki School Commissioners, the transfer of the lease of Town Section 557 from Clarke to Victor Elliott was approved.⁵ However, Elliott only held the lease of Section 557 for a month, before a transfer from Elliott to Augustus Charles Hugh Collins was approved during April 1910.⁶

Construction of the Present House

During late-1911 or early-1912, Collins' commissioned accomplished New Plymouth architect Frank Messenger to design a fashionable new residence for his Barrett Street property. Francis John Messenger was born on the 4th of July 1865, being the second son of William and Arabella. Frank was educated in New Plymouth, and trained with local architect Henry J. T Edmonds before moving to Melbourne, where he worked for Oakden and Kemp for ten years.⁷ In 1891, Messenger married his second cousin Lucy Messenger, before returning to New Plymouth in 1893; he commenced

¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 May 1878, page 2

² Ibid.

³ DP655, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)

⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 23 September 1907, page 7

⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 12 March 1910, page 3

⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 9 April 1910, page 7

⁷ Pritchard, Ian. *Frank Messenger, Architect: The work of a New Plymouth architect*. New Plymouth: Ian Pritchard, 1994.

Heritage Buildings Report

practice in New Plymouth the following year.⁸

Frank Messenger and Horace Victor Griffiths entered into partnership in 1917, with William Taylor joining in 1920.⁹ This partnership ceased in 1930, with Messenger and Taylor forming a new partnership; Leonard Wolfe later joined in a partnership that would last up until Messenger's death on 11 October 1945.¹⁰ Both individually and as a partner, Frank Messenger contributed immensely to New Plymouth's built environment, with his commissions both numerous and varied, ranging from early villas, some of New Plymouth's earliest bungalows (of which this house is one of the earliest), English Domestic Revival Style homes, and both timber and reinforced concrete commercial premises.



Detail showing 17 Barrett Street in 1923 with early dark colour scheme, R. P. Moore, Alexander Turnbull Library, PA6-194

During February 1912, Frank Messenger advertised for tenders for the erection of a residence in Barrett Street.¹¹ Later, on the 13th of April 1912, a permit was granted to A. C. H. Collins for the construction of a residence on Town Section 557; the architect was noted as Frank Messenger and the building had an estimated value of £888.¹² It is unclear when the house was completed, but Collins is first noted as residing at this location in Barrett Street in the 1913 edition of Wises Post Office Directory.¹³

A new 21 year lease for Town Section 557 was granted to Augustus Collins from the 1st of October 1928, with the Collins' occupying the house until early-1941 when they relocated to 156 Carrington Street.¹⁴ Augustus Collins later passed away at New Plymouth Hospital on the 10th of March 1947, aged 77 years.¹⁵ A number of representatives from New Plymouth bowling clubs and the dental profession attended Collins' funeral, with wreaths laid by the Taranaki branch of the Dental Association, the Vogeltown Bowling Club, the New Plymouth Bowling Club, and the New Plymouth branch of the British Israel Federation.¹⁶

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 17 February 1912, page 7

¹² NPBC Building Register Book 1902-22, Puke Ariki Archives (ARC2011-204)

¹³ Wises Post Office Directory, 1913

¹⁴ CT TN72/204, LINZ

¹⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 11 March 1947, page 8

¹⁶ *Taranaki Daily News*, 12 March 1947, page 4

Heritage Buildings Report



Detail showing 17 Barrett Street from aerial photograph taken 24 August 1949, Whites Aviation Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, WA-21724-G

Following the Collins' relocation to Carrington Street, the lease for 17 Barrett Street was transferred to Edward Carr in March 1941.¹⁷ Edward was an accountant and the wife of Edna (nee Monkman), whom he had married in 1921. During late-1941, alterations were made to the house and it appears the western portion was converted into a self-contained flat. A permit for this work was granted to E. J. Carr on the 9th of September 1941, with the builder being a Mr Fletcher and the work having an estimated value of £180; a copy of the plans and specifications for this work is held by NPDC.¹⁸ The present single-car garage at the front of the house was constructed in 1945, with a permit for its construction granted to E. J. Carr on the 7th of February 1945; the builder was K. M. Parkin and it had an estimated value of £80.¹⁹

Edward Carr passed away in January 1947, and the lease was transmitted to Simon Reeves as executor of his deceased estate.²⁰ During 1951, the property was acquired freehold by his widow Edna, with a new certificate of title issued at this time.²¹ During May 1960, Edna passed away at the age of 63 years, with ownership subsequently transferred to her son Ronald Cray Carr.²² Ronald passed away during May 1986, and a new certificate of title was issued during July 1986, with ownership transferred to Ronald's widow Jill Carr later that year.²³ In 1994, Richard Doherty and Glen Carr became joint owners alongside Jill.²⁴ During May 2009, Pamela Davies and Christopher Ridland became joint owners alongside Jill.²⁵

¹⁷ CT TN72/204, LINZ

¹⁸ NPBC Building Register Book 1938-46, Puke Ariki Archives (ARC2011-204)

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ CT TN169/74, LINZ

²² Ibid.

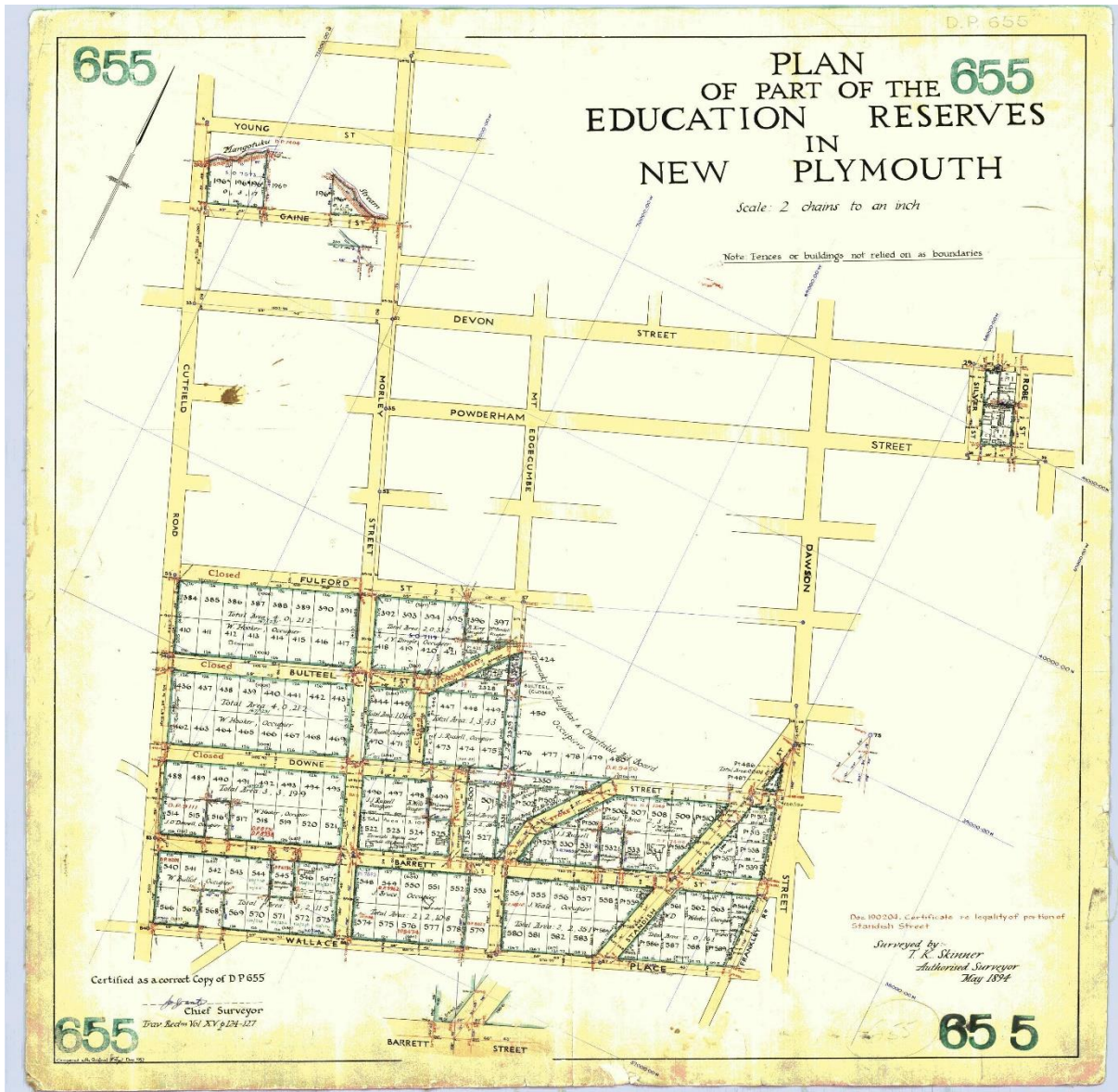
²³ CT TNH1/764, LINZ

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.



Heritage Buildings Report



DP655, LINZ



Heritage Buildings Report



SO8449, LINZ

Reference Sources

See footnotes.

Heritage Buildings Report

Description

The former Collins' Residence is located on the southern side of Barrett Street in the New Plymouth suburb of Westtown. Located close to the site of New Plymouth's former main hospital, this area originally contained a high proportion of architecturally designed dwellings occupied by medical professionals. Whilst development pressures since the 1970s has resulted in an eclectic mix of architectural styles, the area still retains a sense of historical character now uncommon in New Plymouth.

This building is the easternmost house in a row of three 1910s dwellings which also includes 21 and 25 Barrett Street. Whilst all three houses can be broadly described as belonging to the transitional style, 17 Barrett Street is more overtly bungalow in form and appearance when compared to 21 and 25 Barrett Street, and is significant as one of the earliest overtly bungalow style houses constructed in New Plymouth.

Positioned near the centre of a full quarter acre section, the single storey timber dwelling is clad in horizontal weatherboards, with the roof sheathed in corrugated steel; a two-flue brick chimney with clay pots rises through the roof near the rear of the dwelling. Typical of the bungalow style, the house features asymmetrical planning, wide low-pitched gables, window hoods, and exposed rafters under the eaves. However, the windows are predominantly timber sashes (with divided upper sashes) and are reminiscent of those used by Frank Messenger in his earlier villa's.

The main front elevation faces roughly north-west towards Barrett Street, with a small lawn, single car garage and stone wall located in the front yard. Extending across the front elevation of the house is a wide, low-pitched projecting gable encompassing a deep veranda with wide boxed pillars; originally open, much of the veranda was enclosed during the 1940s.

The eastern portion of the enclosed veranda is fitted with timber casements and a glazed timber door, whilst the western portion has been extended to the north-west and incorporates a set of divided timber casements and another glazed entrance door. A single sash window with divided upper sash is positioned west of the enclosed veranda, with the upper gable end stepped-out and finished with corbelling, angled moulding and vertical battens.

The south-western elevation incorporates a single sash window with divided upper sash near the frontage, with a pair of identical sashes positioned at centre. The central sashes are fitted with an angled hood supported by bungalow style slatted brackets, whilst a gabled side entrance porch is located further south. As with the front elevation, the upper gable end stepped-out and finished with corbelling, angled moulding and vertical battens.

The north-eastern elevation is fitted with three single sashes of varying sizes, and a central pair of sashes. As with the south-western elevation, the central pair of sashes is fitted with a sloping hood supported by bungalow style slatted brackets, with the upper gable end again stepped-out and finished with corbelling, angled moulding and vertical battens. The rear (south-eastern) elevation encompasses a lean-to and half-hipped gable extension fitted with timber window and door joinery.



Heritage Buildings Report

Assessment:

Historical	Constructed for dentist Augustus Charles Hugh Collins in 1912, this house has only ever been occupied by one other family, the Carr's, who have held possession for almost eighty years since 1941. This house stands testament to the skill and progressive designs of noted New Plymouth architect Frank Messenger, who both individually and within his subsequent partnerships, contributed much to New Plymouth's built environment during the early decades of the twentieth century.	✓
Importance to Community	-	✓
Architecture & Construction	This house has considerable architectural significance as one of the earliest overtly bungalow style houses to be constructed in New Plymouth.	✓✓
Setting and Context	This house makes a strong positive contribution to the local streetscape and is part of a row of three houses constructed during the early-mid 1910s.	✓
Archaeology	-	
Representativeness, rarity and integrity	This house is a locally rare example of an overtly bungalow style dwelling constructed prior to the First World War. The house, although subject to some alterations, retains a high degree of external integrity, with many original features surviving intact.	✓
Meets threshold for listing (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓