

**HERITAGE STATEMENT**  
**2 MACMILLAN AVENUE– CASHMERE HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**



**PHOTOGRAPH 2008**

**STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

Cashmere Hills Presbyterian Church was built between 1926 – 1929 to the design of Christchurch architect Cecil Wood in conjunction with his partner R.S.D Harman. It is listed in the Christchurch City Plan as a Group 3 protected heritage item. It is also registered by the Historic Places Trust as a Category II Historic Place.

The first Presbyterian Church Services were held in Canterbury in 1853 and in 1854 there was a public meeting to establish a Scottish Church in Christchurch. Several Presbyterian Churches were established in the colony in the very early days with many being designed by Samuel Farr.

The Cashmere Hills Presbyterian Church has social and historical significance as it was designed to cater for the developing suburbs in the Cashmere Hills.

The cultural and spiritual heritage value is also reflective of the needs of the Presbyterian Church to serve these developing neighbourhoods in the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This was recognised after canvassing families on the Cashmere Hills proved that the need for a Presbyterian Church existed.

Architectural and aesthetic heritage value are connected to the design and the designers of this church. Christchurch born Cecil Wood (1878-1947) began his architectural career in the office of local architect Frederick Strouts, and worked as a draughtsman with the firm Clarkson and Ballantyne before gaining valuable experience in England from 1901-1905 with leading Edwardian Arts and Crafts architect Leonard Stokes and Robert Weir Schultz who was working in the Tudor revival and neo-Georgian styles.

After returning to New Zealand in 1908, Wood set up his own architectural practice in Christchurch. He had a varied practice, and became Canterbury's leading inter-war architect, though his reputation extended nationwide. Although it is his domestic architecture for which he is most recognised and renowned, Wood also had a high output of educational buildings, public and commercial buildings, and ecclesiastical buildings. Wood designed churches in the Arts and Crafts style (St Barnabas Church, Sunday School and Parish Hall, Fendalton Road), and for educational buildings he favoured a collegiate gothic style (Christ's College Dining Hall and administration block, St Michael and All Angels School Classrooms).

In 1927 the project was taken over by R.S.D Harman in the absence of Cecil Wood. He oversaw the construction, produced working drawings, and also designed woodwork for the interior and exterior.

Situated on the corner of a sloping corner site of Dyers Pass Road and MacMillan Avenue, the Cashmere Hills Presbyterian Church is typical of the carefully crafted Arts and Craft style buildings of Wood's practice. This corner site also lends the building to be significant as a landmark item and is built very close to the street frontage.

Technological and craftsmanship significance relate to the material used in the construction of the church. The outer walls are made of Port Hills basalt and are randomly interspersed with a variety of coloured rock - such as the red tuff from Tai Tapu. This is significant as it shows the use and procurement of local materials. The interior uses Timaru basalt, Mt Somers sandstone, and Oamaru Stone. Another important element of craftsmanship relates to Frederick Gurnsey who was commissioned to carve the communion table and pulpit. Gurnsey was well known for his carving work on the Christchurch Bridge of Remembrance.

There is no known archaeological significance on this site.

**REFERENCES:**

CCC heritage files and plans

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