

Miramar Bowling Club Pavilion

75a Puriri Street



Image: *Charles Collins, 2015*

Summary of heritage significance

- The Miramar Bowling Club Pavilion is a much-modified example of a Moderne-style festival pavilion that was constructed as a part of the 1939-1940 Centennial Exhibition.
- The pavilion is an example of the work of the well regarded New Zealand architect and leading exhibition designer, Edmund Anscombe, and is one of a suite of buildings that he designed for the Centennial Exhibition. The pavilion was built for the 1939-1940 Centennial Exhibition, which was one of this country's greatest commemorative events. It is the sole surviving building of this important complex.
- The Pavilion has social value for its long-term recreational use as the clubrooms for the Miramar Bowling Club

District Plan:	Map 7, symbol 446 (PC53)
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP 89983
Heritage Area:	No
HPT Registered:	No
Archaeological Site:	Unknown archaeological risk
Other Names:	Centennial Exhibition – fire station
Key physical dates:	1939 built, 1948 relocated
Architect / Builder:	Edward Anscombe
Former uses:	Centennial Exhibition fire station
Current uses:	Clubrooms
Earthquake Prone Status:	SR202587 , Bdg StrengthInv, Bldg - Miramar Bowling Club Pavilion -, NOT Earthquake Prone

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History¹

1.1 History

The Miramar Bowling Club begun in 1946 with one green, for use by men only. The club initially had a small pavilion but acquired its clubrooms from the Centennial Exhibition. The building had been the exhibition's fire station.

The Centennial Exhibition opened on 8 November 1939 and closed, on 4 May 1940, in the shadow of World War II. It was probably the largest single event the country had staged up to that point. The 55-hectare site featured exhibitions from many different countries as well as a celebration of New Zealand's achievements in 100 years of nationhood.

Edmund Anscombe was commissioned to design the huge complex and most of the buildings, prefabricated and temporary in construction, were erected in a very short period by an army of builders. Anscombe only intended the buildings to have a life of five years² but they did have to meet existing building codes. He used what was then the cheapest building material available – painted asbestos cement in flat sheets and battens.³ The fire station was in operational use at the Exhibition and answered 83 call-outs.⁴

After the exhibition closed, the overseas pavilions were dismantled, while other buildings were converted into barracks by the Air Force. Following the fire in 1946, which destroyed many of the exhibition buildings, the remainder of the buildings were dismantled to make way for the expansion of Wellington Airport.⁵

In 1948 the Miramar Bowling Club acquired the fire station building. It was converted to house lockers, a bar and changing facilities. It has had verandahs attached to the front, aluminium windows fitted, and a number of alterations to the internal layout, but the building remains generally intact.⁶ It is still in use as the Bowling Club's clubrooms.

¹ Russell Murray, 'Miramar Bowling Club Pavillion, 75a Puriri Street' unpublished heritage report for DPC 53 (2006)

² *Evening Post* 21/1/1993.

³ W. Toomath, 'New Zealand Displayed: Anscombe's Exhibition Design', in W. Renwick (ed), *Creating a National Spirit: Celebrating New Zealand's Centennial* (VUW Press, Wellington, 2004), p.41.

⁴ *Official History*, p.61.

⁵ Another partial survivor is the mechanism that drives the Kelburn Park fountain, which came from the Centennial Fountain. Toomath, p.44.

⁶ Building Permits 00056:368:B28319, 1949; 00056:383:B29528, 1950; 00277:937:18. WCA.



1942 The Centennial Exhibition buildings and fire station – far right.⁷

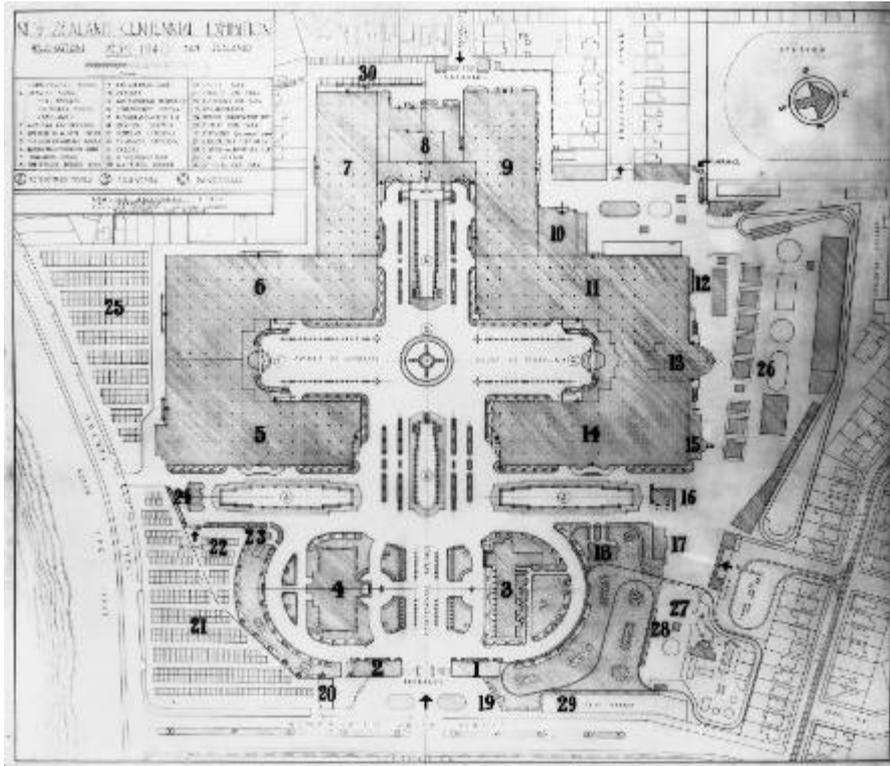


Enlarged part of the previous photo to show the fire station building.

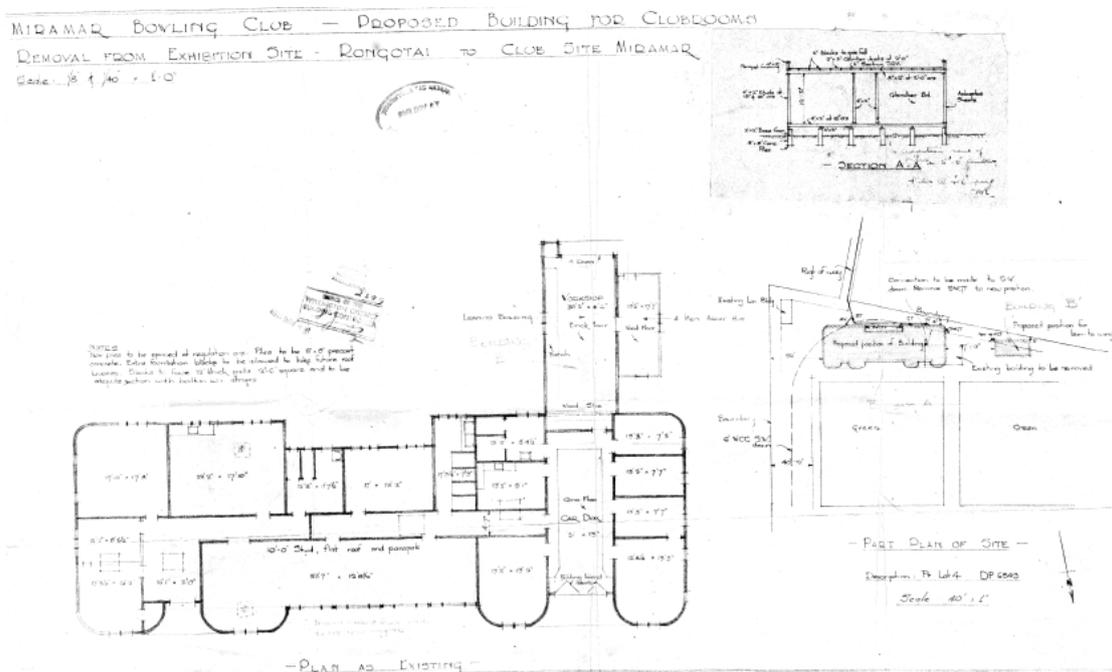


The fire station is the single storey building to the centre left of this photograph, ATL ref: 1/4-048873-G

⁷ Rows of Royal New Zealand Air Force members, Rongotai, Wellington. Evatt, G S: Photographs, chiefly regarding the Royal New Zealand Air Force during World War II. Ref: 1/2-106363-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22529245>



The fire station is marked with the number “2” on the Centennial Exhibition Plan 1939, ATL ref: 1/1-015667-G.



1948 proposed plan to relocate the former firestation from the Exhibition Site - Rongotai⁸

⁸ WCC Archives ref 00056_354_B27244

1.2 Timeline of modifications

19 Dec 1946	WCC Archives ref 00056:328:B25584, 75 Darlington Road, pavilion, Legal description: Pt Lot 4 DP 6349. Owner: Miramar Bowling Club. Builder: J Craig. Application value: £55. Floor area: 600 square feet, Building Permit/Consent
August 1948	WCC Archives ref 00056:354:B272244 consent to relocate building
1993	WCC Archives ref 00060:28:1096, 75 Darlington Road, club rooms, Building Permit/Consent
2013	202587 , Bdg StrengthInv, Bldg - Miramar Bowling Club Pavilion -, NOT Earthquake Prone

1.3 Architect

Edmund Anscombe (1874-1948) was a prominent architect in inter-war New Zealand. His embrace of new styles was remarkable and his greatest work took place later in his life.

Anscombe was born in Sussex and came to New Zealand as a child. He began work as a builder's apprentice in Dunedin and in 1901 went to America to study architecture. He returned to Dunedin in 1907 and designed the School of Mines building for the University of Otago. The success of this design gained him the position of architect to the University. Five of the main University buildings were designed by Anscombe, including the Lindo Ferguson Building (1927), as well as Otago Girls' High School and several of Dunedin's commercial buildings.

Anscombe moved to Wellington about 1928 and was known for his work as the designer of the Centennial Exhibition (1939-1940). He was interested in the housing shortage and held strong views concerning the industrial advancement of New Zealand.⁹

The practice of Edmund Anscombe and Associates, Architects, had offices in Dunedin, Wellington and Hawkes Bay, and Anscombe's buildings include:

- The Vocational Centre for Disabled Servicemen, Wellington (1943)
- Sargent Art Gallery, Wanganui
- Apartments in Wellington including Anscombe Flats, 212 Oriental Parade (1937) and Franconia, 136 The Terrace (1938).

⁹ New Zealand Historic Places Trust Professional Biographies, 'Edmund Anscombe,' accessed 4 September 2012
<http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Anscombe,+Edmund>.

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

The Miramar Bowling Club is a long, low building, facing north and overlooking the Club's greens in Puriri Street. The building is single-storey and timber-framed, with cladding of textured plaster. The plaster has a seamless finish, the only change in the surface being a light thickening at the base of the walls for the foundation.

Although the original plans for this building show a series of curved bays to the northern elevation (facing the bowling greens), the footprint of the building has since been simplified, and the insets between the bays have all been in-filled. Other recent alterations include the new aluminium windows and doors – that have no relation to the original fenestration scheme, and the new (c.1993) curved canopies over the windows and doors.

The remaining features of the original building include the curved ends to the building at its northeast and northwest corners; the white plaster finish; and the low parapet that hides a shallow single-pitch roof. Interior spaces are modern, and there is no visible evidence of the original fire station function.

2.2 Materials

- Aluminium framed windows
- Timber construction
- Textured plaster with a seamless finish

2.3 Setting

The building is discreetly sited down a lane off Puriri Street and amongst single-storey houses. It is barely seen from the road, so has no townscape value except in context of the playing greens. In its immediate setting, the open space of the greens allows the building to be seen in the round. The wider setting is southern Miramar, a predominantly residential area.

3.0 Sources

Russell Murray, *Miramar Bowling Club, Heritage Report*. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 53.

Wellington City Council. *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. Wellington City Council, 2001.

4.0 Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance

Cultural heritage values

Aesthetic Value:

Architectural: Does the item have architectural or artistic value for characteristics that may include its design, style, era, form, scale, materials, colour, texture, patina of age, quality of space, craftsmanship, smells, and sounds?

The Miramar Bowling Club Pavilion is a much-modified example of a Moderne-style festival pavilion that once formed part of the 1939-40 Centennial Exhibition.

Townscape: Does the item have townscape value for the part it plays in defining a space or street; providing visual interest; its role as a landmark; or the contribution it makes to the character and sense of place of Wellington?

Group: Is the item part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use?

The building has some group value as one of a suite of buildings designed for the Centennial Exhibition. This value has been somewhat diminished by the loss of most of the complex to fire and development.

Historic Value:

Association: Is the item associated with an important person, group, or organisation?

The pavilion is an example of the work of the well regarded New Zealand architect and leading exhibition designer, Edmund Anscombe, and is one of a suite of buildings that he designed for the Centennial Exhibition.

Association: Is the item associated with an important historic event, theme, pattern, phase, or activity?

The pavilion was built for the 1939 – 40 Centennial Exhibition, which was one of this country's greatest commemorative events. It is the sole surviving building of this important complex.

Scientific Value:

Archaeological: Does the item have archaeological value for its ability to provide scientific information about past human activity?

Unknown risk

Educational: Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate about aspects of the past?

Technological: Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?

The Pavilion has technical value as its construction was typical of the whole complex of Exhibition structures. It gives an insight not only into the technology of the time but to the design aspirations of Edward Anscombe, an architect who was an influential figure in exhibition architecture.

Social Value:

Public esteem: *Is the item held in high public esteem?*

Symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual: *Does the item have symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual or other cultural value for the community who has used and continues to use it?*

Identity/Sense of place/Continuity:

Is the item a focus of community, regional, or national identity?

Does the item contribute to sense of place or continuity?

Sentiment/Connection: *Is the item a focus of community sentiment and connection?*

The conversion of the pavilion from a fire station to a bowling club pavilion is a classic example of innovative, adaptive reuse that has allowed this building to survive more than 60 years beyond its expected life. As a result of this it has high community value as a local recreational facility.

Level of cultural heritage significance

Rare: *Is the item rare, unique, unusual, seminal, influential, or outstanding?*

The pavilion is a rare surviving fragment from the Centennial Exhibition.

Representative: *Is the item a good example of the class it represents?*

Authentic: *Does the item have authenticity or integrity because it retains significant fabric from the time of its construction or from later periods when important additions or modifications were carried out?*

Local/Regional/National/International

Is the item important for any of the above characteristics at a local, regional, national, or international level?

The pavilion has local significance

5.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory	N	
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory	Y	
WCC Records – building file	N	
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)	N	
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory	Y	
Plan change?	Y	PC 53 report by Russell Murray
Heritage Area Report	N	
Heritage Area Spreadsheet	N	
Heritage items folder (electronic)	Y	
HPT website	N	
HPT files	N	
Conservation Plan	N	
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)	Y	

Background research

Insert any relevant background information into this section. This may include:

- *Additional plans, such as those for alterations*
- *Chunks of text from other sources such as Cyclopedia of NZ, Papers Past*
- *Additional images*