

WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME 'Clunes' / 'Cameron's Castle'
ADDRESS 165 Wairamarama Onewhero Road, Onewhero
PHOTOGRAPH



[26 May 2020]

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM No.	x	HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY	N/A
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Lot 2 DPS 79040		
FILE NUMBERS	305626		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	1915-16		
ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/ BUILDER	FW Mountjoy, architect		
STYLE	California Bungalow		

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION & SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

One and a half-storey bungalow with L-shaped footprint and gabled roofs. Ground floor veranda carried on tapered columns, sash and casement & fanlight type windows, corbelled chimneys, two with external chimneybreasts, sunhoods over windows. Box and bay windows, entrance porch, recessed first floor balconies and three-storey turret are key features of the principal [west & north] elevations. Porthole window on south wall and circular relief motif on turret; exposed rafters on sunhoods and at eaves. Multi-pane upper sashes and fanlights set with coloured glass.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Reinforced concrete, timber joinery, decramastic roofing tiles.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Reroofed & car port added; ground floor timber balustrading removed & first floor balcony balustrading installed; shower room on rear porch removed; round windows in south elevation reglazed with faux leadlight Cameron and Tilsley family crests; en suite bathroom and office created in roof space on east elevation; replacement of external and internal doors. (post-1987).

SURROUNDINGS, CONTRIBUTION TO CONTEXT & EXTENT OF SCHEDULING

The house is situated on a rural property, within a mature garden setting, on the east side of Wairamarama Onewhero Road and midway between its intersection with Klondyke and Kauri Roads. The property lies to the south of the village of Onewhero and the house is set back from the road and largely screened by vegetation; the turret can be glimpsed from the roadway and the presence of the house is also signalled by entrance gates and a treelined drive. The extent of scheduling encompasses the immediate garden setting of the dwelling, rather than the property as a whole.

- **HISTORY OF SITE/STRUCTURE/PLACE/AREA**

Duncan and Christina Cameron built this dwelling upon their farm at Onewhero, which they called 'Clunes'. Their previous farmhouse in Southland had burnt down, which suggests a possible reason for constructing a new home in concrete. Duncan Cameron (c.1846-1926) was born in Lochaber, Scotland and arrived in New Zealand in 1876. Cameron farmed at Methven in Canterbury and Maori Hill in Southland before settling at Onewhero, where he established a large sheep farm. A train with 43 trucks containing sheep and cattle was offloaded at Tuakau in February 1915. Having come from Woodville the train was commissioned by Cameron to transport stock to his new farm. The original Onewhero golf course was developed on the property, at which Duncan Cameron died in October 1926. He was survived by his wife and six children. Christina Cameron died at 'Clunes' nine years later (c.1858-1935). The Camerons' youngest daughter, Forbes (b. 1897), lived in the house until her death, when it was bequeathed to the Presbyterian church, at which time it was abandoned and vandalised. The property was acquired by the Tilsley family in 1987 and the house subsequently restored. Bob Tilsley received a Queen's Birthday honour for his services to agriculture and the community in 2008. The property was put up for sale in 2017 and subsequently changed hands.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

As the Cameron farmhouse post-dates 1900, any potential archaeological significance the site may have would likely relate to its earlier occupation and use.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Cameron farmhouse has high architectural significance for its California Bungalow design by Pukekohe architect FW Mountjoy. The house is one of very few Waikato buildings included in Peter Shaw's history of New Zealand architecture. 'Clunes' was hailed as 'one of the most up-to-date country dwelling-houses to be found anywhere in the Auckland Province' at the time of its completion [*Pukekohe & Waiuku Times* 19 September 1916, p. 3]. The house was described as having nine main rooms on the ground floor and six bedrooms and two bathrooms on the first floor. Francesco William Mountjoy (known as Frank, 1882-1963) was advertising his services in the *Southland Times* in early 1913 but in 1915 stated during a court case that he had practised in Pukekohe for about five years. The design of the Cameron farmhouse closely resembles those of bungalows published in American plan books in the early 1910s, although the tower is a departure from the model. In 1922 Mountjoy took over the management of the Manukau Joinery Works in Onewhero and, while continuing to undertake some architectural commissions, he later became a councillor on the Onewhero Borough Council (c.1929) and unsuccessfully contested the mayoralty of that borough in 1933.

CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Cameron farmhouse has cultural value as it provides a sense of historic continuity and community identity in the rural landscape near Onewhero.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Cameron farmhouse has historic significance for its association with Duncan Cameron, who was a notable Onewhero sheep farmer and breeder, and his family. The Tilsley family's association with the building is also notable, thanks to their restoration of the house and contribution to cattle breeding.

SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Cameron farmhouse has scientific value for its potential to provide further information about the way of life of the Cameron family and their contribution to the development of agriculture in the Onewhero district.

TECHNOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Cameron farmhouse has technological significance for its early 20th century concrete construction methods and materials. The house was fitted with electric light at the time of its completion.

• **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

'Clunes' has high overall heritage significance to Waikato district. The homestead has high architectural significance for its California Bungalow styling by Pukekohe architect FW Mountjoy and its publication in Peter Shaw's *History of New Zealand Architecture*. The former Cameron farmhouse has cultural value as it provides evidence of historic continuity and historic significance for its association with the Cameron and Tilsley families. The former Cameron farmhouse has scientific value and technical significance for its potential to provide further information about its early residents and the methods and materials used in its construction.

• **RECOMMENDED CATEGORY OF HISTORIC HERITAGE LISTING**

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REFERENCES

- *New Zealand Herald* 21 May 1914, p. 9; 26 February 1916, p. 14; 13 September 1922, p. 16; 22 October 1926, p. 12; 18 December 1937, p. 17.
- *Auckland Star* 6 August 1926, p. 3; 6 August 1928, p. 20; 4 February 1933, p. 10; 27 March 1933, p. 3; 12 January 1935, p. 10; 17 May 1938, p. 2.
- *Pukekohe & Waiuku Times* 23 December 1913, p. 3; 21 July 1914, p. 2; 9 February 1915, p. 3; 19 February 1915, p. 2; 12 March 1915, p. 2; 16 March 1915, p. 3; 6 September 1915, p. 2; 13 September 1915, p. 1; 19 September 1916, p. 3; 16 February 1917, p. 2;
- *Southland Times* 10 February 1913, p. 1.
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- P Shaw *A History of New Zealand Architecture* Auckland, 1997 [second edition].
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AUTHOR	Dr Ann McEwan / Heritage Consultancy Services
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AUTHOR	Dr Ann McEwan
PEER REVIEWED	xx
REVIEWER	xx



165 Wairamarama Onewhero Road, with former Cameron residence marked by a star.



Land parcel at 165 Wairamarama Onewhero Road showing house lot marked by star.



Extent of scheduling – house and garden setting, 165 Wairamarama Onewhero Road, Onewhero.