

**CHRISTCHURCH DISTRICT PLAN – SCHEDULED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 1152
*DWELLING AND SETTING - 47 RUE BALGUERIE, AKAROA***



PHOTOGRAPH : CLARE KELLY, 2011

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Historical and social values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular person, group, organisation, institution, event, phase or activity; the continuity and/or change of a phase or activity; social, historical, traditional, economic, political or other patterns.

47 Rue Balguerrie and setting are of historical and social significance for their history of ownership and associations with Akaroa families. The property was purchased from Francois Lelievre in 1851 by John T Watson, Akaroa's resident magistrate from 1847 to 1870. Francois Lelievre arrived in Akaroa in 1840 on the Comte de Paris as a member of the crew and stayed on with the settlers, with the Lelievre family becoming one of the most prominent, French families in Akaroa. In 1885 it was purchased by prominent Akaroa merchant George Armstrong giving it historical and social significance through this association. Historical and social significance also come through the purchase of the property from the Armstrong family in 1935 by Miss Ethel Lelievre. Ethel Lelievre was the grand daughter of Francois Lelievre and was a prominent figure in Akaroa and Canterbury political and cultural organisations in the mid-20th century. She owned the property until her death in 1973, having subdivided off what are now numbers 49 and 51 Rue Balguerrie in 1969. The house was sold by her executors to Akaroa fisherman Brian Mitchell and his wife Janice. In 1988 it passed out of local ownership.

Ethel Lelievre was a member of the Horticultural Society, President and Secretary of the Akaroa Red Cross and only the second woman to serve as an Akaroa Borough Councillor. She rose from President of the Akaroa Women's Institute to President of the Canterbury Federation and a member of the New Zealand Executive. She also represented New

Zealand at meetings of the International Union of Child Welfare in London and Save the Children Fund in The Hague. She lobbied the government to purchase the Langlois Eteveneaux house on the corner of Rue Balguerie and Rue Lavaud which is now a prominent part of Akaroa Museum. Ethel Lelievre was awarded an MBE in 1950 for her service to Public Affairs. The dwelling has remained in the ownership of the same family since the late 1980s.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural and spiritual values that demonstrate or are associated with the distinctive characteristics of a way of life, philosophy, tradition, religion, or other belief, including: the symbolic or commemorative value of the place; significance to Tangata Whenua; and/or associations with an identifiable group and esteemed by this group for its cultural values.

47 Rue Balguerie has cultural significance for its demonstration of the characteristics of the way of life of people in Banks Peninsula during the early 20th century and its continued use as a dwelling. In particular it reflects the strong continued association and active contributions of the families and descendants of the first French settlers to the area.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural and aesthetic values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular style, period or designer, design values, form, scale, colour, texture and material of the place.

47 Rue Balguerie has architectural and aesthetic significance as a turn of the 20th century, corner bay villa. The dwelling is orientated towards the street and set back nearly 25 metres. It was originally within an acre of garden and still retains much of the early planting. The building is a timber structure with a metal roof, featuring box bay, double hung sash windows facing the street and facing north-west, with a veranda wrapped around the south and north-west elevation between the box bays. There are carved timber eaves brackets. Although the veranda roof is not the original bull nosed roof and the decorative timber balustrade has been removed, the carved post brackets remain. Two brick chimneys have been removed but the double backed fireplace between the original drawing room and bedroom has been retained. The dwelling has been repaired and restored since the late 1980s with work including the replacement of the roof, front verandah and over half the external weatherboards. A fire in 2005 caused serious internal damage, and repairs, alterations and extensions were made to the interior and the north-west and north-east facades as a result, however the historic form of the villa was largely retained.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

Technological and craftsmanship values that demonstrate or are associated with: the nature and use of materials, finishes and/or technological or constructional methods which were innovative, or of notable quality for the period.

The dwelling at 47 Rue Balguerie has technological and craftsmanship significance through its demonstration of turn of the twentieth century carpentry skills and particularly through the decorative elements such as the eaves brackets and carved timber veranda post brackets.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Contextual values that demonstrate or are associated with: a relationship to the environment (constructed and natural), a landscape, setting, group, precinct or streetscape; a degree of consistency in terms of type, scale, form, materials, texture, colour, style and/or detail;

recognised landmarks and landscape which are recognised and contribute to the unique identity of the environment.

The dwelling and its setting at 47 Rue Balguerie have contextual significance as part of the historic streetscape, generally comprising modest timber cottages and houses. It conforms in relation to both the scale and materials that define the streetscape.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Archaeological or scientific values that demonstrate or are associated with: the potential to provide information through physical or scientific evidence an understanding about social historical, cultural, spiritual, technological or other values of past events, activities, structures or people.

The dwelling and its setting are of archaeological significance because they have the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

47 Rue Balguerie and setting are of overall significance to the Christchurch District including Banks Peninsula. The dwelling and setting have historical, social and cultural significance particularly through their association with well known 20th century Akaroa personality Ethel Lelievre and also with the association with her grandfather Francois Lelievre and the prominent Akaroa merchant George Armstrong. The dwelling has architectural and aesthetic significance as a good example of a turn of the 20th century corner bay villa and technological and craftsmanship significance through the carpentry and decorative timber elements. The building and setting are of contextual significance as part of the historic Rue Balguerie streetscape. The dwelling and its setting are of archaeological significance because they have the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900.

REFERENCES:

CCC Heritage File *47 Rue Balguerie*, 2011

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PLEASE NOTE THIS ASSESSMENT IS BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF WRITING. DUE TO THE ONGOING NATURE OF HERITAGE RESEARCH, FUTURE REASSESSMENT OF THIS HERITAGE ITEM MAY BE NECESSARY TO REFLECT ANY CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF ITS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE.

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