



**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE  
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 394  
*DWELLING AND SETTING – 2/408 MONTREAL STREET,  
CHRISTCHURCH***



**PHOTOGRAPH: M.VAIR-PIOVA, 2014**

**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.*

has historical and social significance as it is representative of small dwellings erected within the four avenues during the 1870s. Research to date indicates the dwelling was built in the late 1870s when the land was owned by the Rev. John Aldred. Aldred, an ordained Wesleyan minister, had arrived in New Zealand in 1840. He settled in Christchurch in 1854 as one of the first Wesleyan clergyman in the town and was granted land in Durham Street North by the Superintendent in 1856. Aldred was sent to Dunedin in 1864 but he later returned to live in St Albans.

In 1881 the land was conveyed to Charles Duggan, painter of Christchurch. Duggan sold the property in 1900, by which time all four cottages (404, 406, 408 and 410) were built. The new owner of the property was Annie Maude Grady, wife of milliner Richard Grove Grady. There were several changes of ownership before Frederick Laws, bricklayer, purchased the property in 1922 and subdivided it. 404 and 406 Montreal Street became separate titles while

408 and 410 Montreal Street have remained on one title, although they are separately leased. Owner/occupiers of 408 Montreal Street have included a salesman, a county clerk, a retired milkhand, a master painter and notable Christchurch architect, Don Donnithorne. During the mid-1980s 404, 406, 408 and 410 Montreal Street were all owned by architect Don Donnithorne.

The house is recognised as a property that celebrated New Zealand poet, James K Baxter lived in during his short time in Christchurch (Elworthy, 1998). Baxter moved to Christchurch in late 1947 and stayed for close to a year before marrying Jacqueline Cecilia Sturm in Napier in December 1948 after which Baxter moved to Wellington. In Christchurch, Baxter visited a Jungian psychologist and as a result 'began incorporating Jungian symbolism into his poetic theory and practice' (Millar, 2007). Whilst living in the city he worked as a porter at the sanatorium and as a copy editor for the Christchurch Press. He began associating with the poets Allen Curnow and Denis Glover during this time (Millar, 2007). The current owners purchased the property in 1998 and have restored and renovated the cottage.

## **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.*

The cottage at 408 Montreal Street has cultural significance as an early inner-city cottage dating from the 1870s that demonstrates of the way of life of its former inhabitants for approximately 140 years. It also reflects the way of life of residents today who choose to live in small historical dwellings in the central city.

## **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.*

The dwelling has architectural and aesthetic significance as a small vernacular cottage. It is a single storeyed weatherboard building with a single gable roof. The symmetrical facade has sash windows flanking a central front door. It has a built in chimney on the north end of the building. By 2001 the cottage had fallen into a state of disrepair and underwent a substantial renovation and restoration process. The lean-to at the rear of the building was replaced with a slightly larger form, the floor structure was replaced with a concrete slab, and the fireplace and chimney were replaced with a lightweight replica. The cottage was also re-roofed and the existing front door was replaced with a protective canopy added above.

## **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 cottage at 408 Montreal Street has technological and craftsmanship significance due to its early construction, materials (mainly timber) and detailing which evidence the period in which it was built.

## **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 has high contextual significance as one of a group of early cottages in Montreal Street. The group consists of five cottages, four of which are single storeyed. The cottage at 408 Montreal Street is single storeyed and sits at the northern end of the group, one house in from the corner of Beveridge Street. This group of cottages forms a coherent section of streetscape in an area of Christchurch which has undergone considerable urban renewal in recent years. These cottages reflect the historic residential character of the area around Conference/Peacock and Beveridge Streets. The streetscape value of this cohesive group is enhanced by the proximity of the buildings to the street. The setting of the cottage consists of a small rectangular section with the cottage facing the street. The street boundary is addressed by a new medium height fence. The consistency of the cottage with the rest of the group in terms of its style, form, materials and detailing, along with the small scale of the building and section, and proximity to the roadway gives this cottage landmark significance within the area.

## **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 cottage and setting at 408 Montreal Street are of archaeological significance because of 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. The original outhouse was located at the rear of the section on the northern corner of the property

## **ASSESSMENT STATEMENT**

The dwelling and its setting at 408 Montreal Street has overall heritage significance to Christchurch, including Banks Peninsula. The cottage has historical and social significance as an early 1870s cottage built by Rev Aldred, after whom Beveridge Street was once named. It is also significant because of its association one of New Zealand's best known poets James K Baxter, who lived there during his time in Christchurch in the late 1940s. The dwelling has cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of life of its past and present residents and architectural significance as a colonial vernacular building. The dwelling has technological and craftsmanship significance for its remaining evidence of early construction methods, materials and detailing. The dwelling and its setting have high contextual significance as part of a group of five 1870s cottages which make a significant contribution to

the historic streetscape of the northern sector of the central city. first occurred on this property.

**REFERENCES:**

Christchurch City Council Heritage files *408 Montreal Street, Cottage*

Elworthy, Sir Peter. (1998, August 18) Letter to Jenny May, Christchurch City Council.

Millar, Paul. 'Baxter, James Keir 1926 - 1972'. Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, updated 22 June 2007.

**REPORT DATED:        2 FEBRUARY, 2015**

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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