

APPENDIX 2
Heritage Assessment

**36 Ferry Street (former 1st Seatoun
Scout Hall), Seatoun**

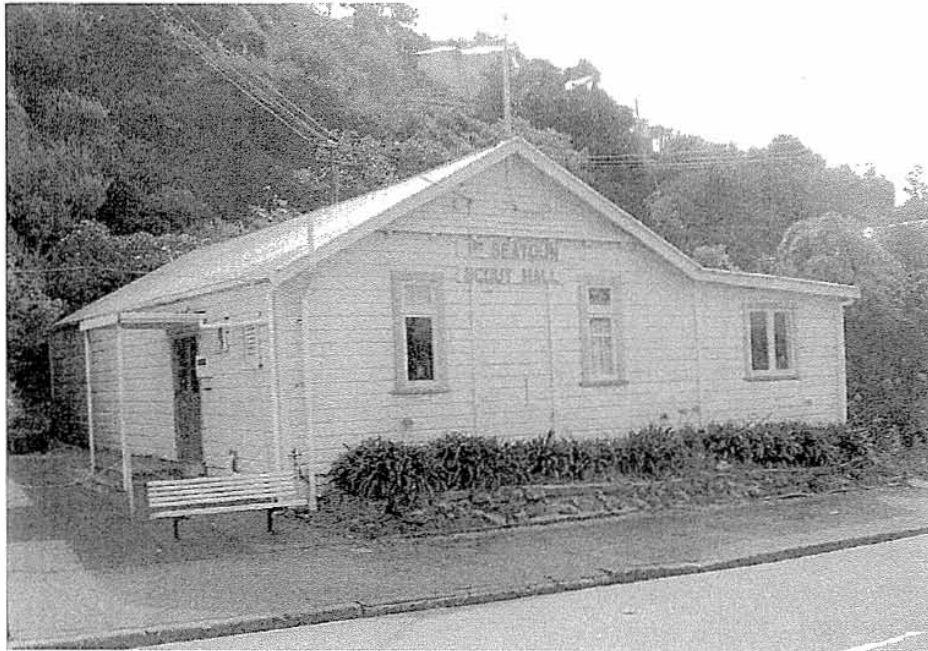


Photo: M. Kelly 2007

Name of designer: Not known

Date of construction: 1932

NZHPT registration: Not registered

District plan listing: Not listed

Legal description: Road reserve

Statement of significance

The former 1st Seatoun Scout Hall is likely to be Wellington's oldest purpose-built scout hall and has some local **historic** and **representative** significance for that. The hall served the needs of Seatoun's scouts (and cubs) for over 60 years before the merger with the Worser Bay scouts. During that period, hundreds of Seatoun children joined the Seatoun Scouts and used that building.

Likewise, its lengthy role in the Seatoun community imbues the building with **social** significance, primarily for its role as a place where so many local boys attended scout and cub practice. The hall has added social significance for its role in providing Seatoun residents with weekly movie nights in the period after its opening. Many local residents are likely to have used the building when they were younger.

The building is unremarkable architecturally, but its modest form and materials are a reminder of the kind of plain, utilitarian structures that communities once built for their use. The **townscape** impact of both the Scout Hall and the neighbouring RSA building is considerably enhanced by their proximity to one another. The grouping, combined with their construction materials and unassuming appearance, gives the buildings a presence on Ferry Street that is clearly distinct from the surrounding residential properties.

History

Robert Baden-Powell (1857-1941) was a successful Army officer who rose to become a lieutenant-general and an expert on military scouting. During the South African War (1899-1902) he won renown for holding Mafeking against a Boer siege for 217 days. He wrote a book called *Aid to Scouting* and its success encouraged him to turn his attentions to writing something relevant to young boys. His next book *Scouting for Boys* became a huge seller and suddenly Baden-Powell had created a movement, although he was initially advocating it solely as an activity to challenge boys.¹

The scouting movement started in England but it quickly went international. That same year, New Zealand's first scout group was established at Kaiapoi. Sea Scouts was established in 1909. Soon scout groups were established all over the country, some 500 by the end of the year 1909.² Wellington's first scout group was established in Brooklyn, closely followed by the 1st Kelburn 1909 Scout Group, which occupies what is probably the country's oldest scout hall – the former Gardens' Battery caretaker's house, built about 1890.

Baden-Powell visited New Zealand for the first time in 1912 (he would make many subsequent visits). The country's first jamboree was held in 1926, the year that the Rev. John Allan founded the 1st Seatoun Scout Group, with Allan Hepburn.³ Bob O'Brien, in his history of Seatoun, suggests the group began much earlier – by 1910.⁴ By 1932, the group was able to build its hall.

The architect of the hall is not known. No name is shown on the permit drawings. The builder was H.D. Field. The permit application was for a cost of £180⁵ but another account suggests it was built at a cost of £221.⁶ The hall was partly financed by an interest-free loan of £100 from local resident Jack Owen and by raising money through movie shows in the hall after it was built. In fact the hall's weekly movie night became a regular and popular feature of Seatoun life for a period, until the construction of theatres in Kilbirnie and Miramar.⁷

¹ See Culliford S.G. 1958, *New Zealand Scouting: The First Fifty Years 1908-1958*, Wellington, The Boy Scouts Association of New Zealand pp.9-10

² *Ibid.* p.15

³ Struthers J. 1975, *Miramar Peninsula: A Historical and Social Study*, Wellington p.188

⁴ Bob O'Brien 2001, *Waka Ferry Tram – Seatoun and the bays to 1958*, the author, Wellington p.134. His evidence for this is that a group of scouts was reported to have left a gathering to help put out a fire at a Seatoun residence in October 1910.

⁵ Permit to erect club house, 00056:108:B9944, WCA

⁶ Struthers op. cit.

⁷ O'Brien op. cit.

In 1963 the hall, which was also used by cubs, was extended with a lean-to to its north elevation. The permit application value was £700,⁸ but again the figure contrasts with that in Struthers, which puts the cost at £1300.⁹ The builder was E. Crawford and the addition was known as the Barnett Memorial Extension, after a substantial portion of the cost was provided for in Elizabeth Barnett's will.

The 1st Seatoun Scout Group was clearly an active and well organised scouting group but it began to suffer from a decline in numbers towards the end of the 20th century. Some time in the late 1990s it was decided to merge with the nearby Worser Bay Scouts to form the Eastern Bay Scouts and Sea Scouts. They operate out of the Worser Bay building. The Seatoun Scout Hall was abandoned and is presently unoccupied.

Description

Setting

The former 1st Seatoun Scout Hall stands at the intersection of Ferry and Forres Streets in Seatoun. It terminates the view along Forres Street towards Ferry Street. Its location at the T-junction therefore lends the building greater townscape impact than it might otherwise have, given its relatively modest size and appearance.

The building's western boundary is tight up against the cliff, which separates Seatoun from Seatoun Heights, at the rear of building. The facade, or eastern elevation, is narrowly separated from the footpath and carriageway by a raised bed planted with agapanthus. To the south of the Scout Hall stands the Seatoun RSA. The two buildings share the same forecourt area, off which either building can be entered. The buildings sit in a predominantly residential area that they happily complement.

Building

Exterior

The former Scout Hall is a single storey building of timber construction, with a corrugated iron roof and casement windows. The entrance, off an asphalt forecourt on the southern side of the building, is sheltered by a simple canopy carried on two steel poles.

⁸ Permit for hall additions, 00058:178:C8246, WCA

⁹ Struthers op. cit.

The building is clad in rusticated weatherboards, has a flag pole atop the gable facing the street, and is comprised of a main section under a gabled roof with a lean-to running along the northern side. The gable apex is infilled with lapped weatherboards resting upon small brackets. This treatment, reminiscent of that commonly given to modest California bungalow style houses in New Zealand, offers some variation in texture on what is essentially a very simple building with little in the way of decorative detailing.

A single diamond-lead fanlight above the northerly window beneath the gable end also lends a minor decorative note. Similarly the existing paint scheme goes some way towards highlighting the various elements of the facade. One feature of the facade that is not distinguished from the weatherboard wall surface is the vertical battening, two between the main windows and a third between the gabled section and the adjoining lean-to.

A section of vertical corrugated iron cladding at the rear of the building, on the south-western corner, appears to relate to a second lean-to behind the main gabled section.

Interior

No interior inspection was possible.

Aerial image with legal boundary



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