

Cluny Park Station Homestead

Rangitikei Line, Palmerston North

NZHPT Register Number: 2847

NZHPT Registration Date: 25/11/82

City/District Council: Manawatu District Council

District Plan Status: Category C



Brief History

The Manson brothers were major early landowners in the Manawatu. In 1877 John Manson bought large tracts of land totalling 13,680 acres and when he died in 1890, his brothers William and Donald inherited the greater part of his estate. By this time Rangitikei Line properties had been developed into first class pasture and the value had increased from £2 to £14 per acre.

In 1893 a homestead was built at the Cluny Park Station by Hübner Bros for William Manson while his brother Donald made his home at Edinckillie Park on the opposite side of Rangitikei Line. The Cluny Park house is in the Victorian Italianate style, which became popular as result of the work of British architects Sir Charles Barry and John Nash. Features of the style are asymmetry, the low roof pitch, classical elements such as the pediment over the windows, the tower, the belvedere (later removed), bracketed eaves and decorative cast iron elements.

A verandah was added as an antipodean version of the Italianate arcade. The house is constructed with corrugated steel roofing and timber rusticated weatherboards and joinery. Gable bargeboards, finials and verandah posts are also of timber with cast iron decoration enhancing the verandah and bay windows. The front of the house is mainly original but a large section of the house at the rear has been removed.

The interior front rooms are largely unchanged from the period of construction with timber cornices and architraves, skirtings, ceiling roses and ornate fireplaces. The kitchen and rear section was modified in 1920.

Cluny Park changed hands several times before it was bought in 1959 by Mr WG Looman, and considerable restoration undertaken. When the neighbouring house of E W Collins was demolished, its iron cast iron work was salvaged for use. The entrance dado and arch and the front room fireplace have also been recycled from elsewhere. English ash, oak and elm trees surround the house.

The substantial barn behind the homestead included a hayloft, riding horse stables, draught horseboxes, and a dairy and milking shed for the house cow. It is built of weatherboards with an iron roof in the Polish design of the Hübner Bros with a finial, decorated gables and a weather vane. There is match lining in the upper floors.

Principal Sources:

Manawatu Branch of the NZHPT Record 120016.

Manawatu District Council Heritage Building Inventory, 2000.

Woodhouse, Edith. Colonial Homes of Palmerston North, Wellington AH & AW Reed, 1975.

