

Craiglockhart (Moginie House)

Massey University Campus, Tennent Drive, Palmerston North

NZHPT Registration Number:	1185
NZHPT Registration Type:	Historic Place – Category II
NZHPT Registration Date:	25/11/82
City/District Council:	Palmerston North City Council
District Plan Status:	Category 2



Brief History

Craiglockhart was built for Charles J. Monro (1851-1933) and his wife Helena (nee MacDonald (1865-1962)), and named after the family estate in Scotland. Monro purchased 51 acres at Fitzherbert directly across the Manawatu River from Palmerston North in 1889 and began developing the land. His house was designed by Whanganui architect, A. Adkins, and the contract was awarded to local builders, Kibblewhite and Taylor for £1023. Craiglockhart, on a rise looking north across the river, was completed in April 1890. The stables were built by Collinson and Bunting, and a pigsty and fowl house were added. The gardens and orchard established by Monro were regarded as one of the most beautiful in the region. Remnants of the orchard can still be found at the bottom of Monro Hill.

The house is a two-storey wooden building with a corrugated iron roof. Additions were made in 1894 and there have been many subsequent alternations including the projecting room above the doorway. The drawing room was 4.5 metres high with Gothic arches and designed to provide excellent acoustics adequate for visiting opera groups. The house had a complex set of stairways leading to various family and servants' bedrooms on the upper floor. One bedroom had a trapdoor leading to the cellar. The service rooms included a kitchen, pantry and dairy. The only toilet was outside at the back of the house.

Modern services were gradually introduced. The water supply for the house initially consisted of a system of rainwater storage tanks and a hand pump, but in 1900 a windmill was installed. In 1908 a pump was placed in the Turitea Stream 220 metres away. In 1904 the telephone was connected and in 1907, electricity was introduced in the form of an electric generator. In 1913 candles and lamps were finally replaced with gas.

Craiglockhart was one of several large houses built at that period which now form part of the Massey University campus. Others were Tiritea, Wharerata and Atawhai (Fergusson Hall). Craighlockhart was purchased by Massey Agricultural College in 1944 from Charles Monro's widow Helena for £3,500, with the help of a bequest from Mrs M Moginie of Auckland, who had a particular interest in the provision of university training for women in agriculture and horticulture. The house became a women's hostel known for some years as Moginie House. The hostel was upgraded in about 1980 and in 1987 its original name was restored when Moginie Hall was built.

Charles Monro was the son of Dr (later Sir) David Monro, who arrived in Nelson in 1842 where he subsequently owned a number of farms. Sir David became Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1861 and was knighted in 1866. Charles was initially destined for an army career and was sent to England aged 16 to be enrolled at Christ's College, Finchley, a small public school. There he participated in the new game of rugby football, and on his return to New Zealand organised the first rugby match played in this country on 14 May 1870 between the teams of Nelson College and the Nelson Football Club. This is commemorated by a lookout, erected on Monro Hill along Bourke Road in 1970 by the New Zealand Rugby Football Union and the National Roads Board. The lookout was revamped by Massey University in 2011 and includes steel sculptures by local ironworker, Mike Currie, which represent various aspects of the life of Charles Monro. A further sculpture commemorating Monro was erected outside Te Manawa Museum where the NZ Rugby Museum is also housed in 2011. Monro was involved through his life in numerous land transactions and farming enterprises including a vinery, orcharding on a commercial scale and investment in the flax industry. He was active in the social, musical and sporting life of Palmerston North.

Principal Sources:

Akers, C. *Monro: The Life and Times of the Man who Gave New Zealand Rugby*. Palmerston North, Clive Akers, 2008.

Louis Changuion, personal communication, 29/7/2013.

Pilkington, D, *Massey History Walk*, Palmerston North, Palmerston North City Council, 1994.

Palmerston North City Library Photograph Collection: Bur 16, 37; Ma 4, 17, 54; Pi 116, 118, 119; Ro 21, 22.