

Stubbs Jewellers Building (Former)

138-139 The Square, Palmerston North

NZHPT Registration Number: 1271
NZHPT Registration Type: Historic Place – Category II
NZHPT Registration Date: 02/07/82
City/District Council: Palmerston North City Council
District Plan Status: Category 1

Other Names: Former O'Connor and Tydeman Building



Brief History

Built in 1923, the former Stubbs Jewellers building is slightly younger than its neighbouring structure, the former Steeles building. Although the identity of the architect of the Stubbs Jewellers building is not known, the two buildings are both designed in the late Edwardian Free Style, and have been described as complementary. Experimentation with various styles was common in late Edwardian English architecture.

The Stubbs Jewellers building façade features an exaggerated and heavily rusticated arch and keystone that takes its inspiration from the Arts and Crafts movement, while the former Steeles building exterior features an oriel window of the Queen Anne style. Both built in brick, they also typify the next stage from the wooden shops that originally stood around the Square. The small slender building was purpose-built by P F O'Connor to accommodate his jeweller's store, O'Connor and Tydeman, in the downstairs space along with optometrists Barry and Freeman and a dentistry upstairs.

The interior layout is similar on both floors, with street-front sales areas and service areas to the rear. The staircase is located towards the front entrance. O'Connor and Tydeman's business was taken over by jeweller Norman Stubbs in the late 1920s and Stubbs continued to occupy that part of the building until 1983.

Barry and Freeman's was later occupied by a café and then the wood and coal store of S Rush and Sons, who also ran a lending library from their store and leased part of their shop space to a tobacconist. The building was leased to Linen House in 1961 and later to Jean Zone who bought the building in 1981. Various businesses have occupied the upper floor over the years. The former Stubbs Jewellers building, along with the former Steeles building, is today a rare example of the Edwardian Free Style in a small commercial premises, and by virtue of this and its location, is a landmark building in the Square, a link with the smaller business premises of the early twentieth century.

Principal Source:

Bowman, I & Kelly, M, *Palmerston North CBD Heritage Inventory*, Palmerston North, Palmerston North City Council, 2003.