

Palmerton North Technical College (now UCOL)

Corner, King Street and Princess Street, Palmerston North

NZHPT Registration Number:	1266
NZHPT Status: Historic Place:	Category II
NZHPT Registration Date:	02/07/82
City/District Council:	Palmerston North City Council
District Plan Status:	Category 2

Other Names: UCOL, Manawatu Polytechnic, Palmerston North Technical Institute



Brief History

Palmerston North's first technical classes began in 1902 in the Presbyterian Hall under the control of the Whanganui Education Board. After virtually lapsing due to falling numbers, classes were revived in 1906 and control given over to the High Schools Board with classes held under the newly formed Technical School Committee. Three years later, under school director F D Opie, funds were raised for the college's own premises.

The Palmerston North Technical College was opened in September 1909. The architect was pre-eminent Wellington-based architect Frederick de Jersey Clere. Clere is considered to have been conservative in his designs for commercial and public buildings, and this is carried through in the Technical College with its 'symmetry and austere lines'. The building is predominantly in the Edwardian Free Style, with elements of Classicism and the Queen Anne style in the gables. It is constructed of concrete and plastered brick with a Marseilles tile roof. There is a large central ventilator. Substantial alterations to the building had been carried out prior to 1933, at which time the gables and upper storey arch windows were removed and fire escapes fitted for safety reasons. Despite these alterations the building remains a good representative example of the style.

In 1955 the College moved to new premises in Rangitikei Street and was renamed the Queen Elizabeth Technical College, to mark the coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The Palmerston North Teachers' College then occupied the former Technical College building. In 1971, the Teachers' College relocated to new buildings in Hokowhitu and the tertiary vocational education component of the Queen Elizabeth Technical College, the Palmerston North Technical Institute, took possession of the former Technical College. The Palmerston North Technical Institute later became the Manawatu Polytechnic, then UCOL. The historical significance of the building lies in its association with the history of technical education in the area, and with Frederick de Jersey Clere, a significant New Zealand architect.

Principal Sources:

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

'Manawatu Polytechnic', *The Guardian*, Jan 17, 1984, p. 14.

Palmerston North Heritage Trails Working Party, *Architects Walk*, Palmerston North, Palmerston North City Council, 1993.

Palmerston North City Library Photograph Collection: Z 5182; Scs 9, 10, 48, 63, 69, 73, 74; Te 1.