



# Purangi School

Junction Rd, Purangi

1909

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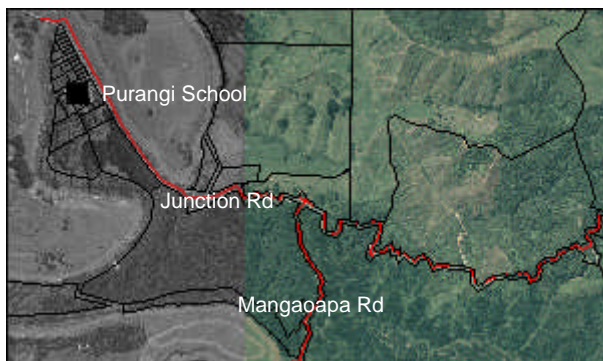
<b>Use:</b>	Residential	<b>Historic Value:</b>	3 out of 5
<b>Materials:</b>	Weatherboards	<b>Architectural Value:</b>	1 out of 4
<b>NZHPT Registered:</b>	Not registered	<b>Technical Value:</b>	- out of 2
<b>Legal Description:</b>	Secs 3-6 18-22 40 42 43 45 Pt Sec 41 Purangi Vill Blk II Ngatimaru SD	<b>Symbolic Value:</b>	- out of 3

**Rarity Value:** - out of 2

**Townscape Value:** 1 out of 2

**Group Value:** - out of 2

**Overall Heritage Value:** 5 out of 20



Purangi School was initially started during 1901 in the front room of the new Purangi Boarding House. The use of this room was a fee of 10 shillings a week, which was paid to the proprietor. The teacher at this time, Mr. Humphries, was shared with Matau School – working on a three-day rotation. Apparently, he was paid £100 per year for his efforts.

By 1908, the education department refused to pay the 10 shillings a week, the owner would not accept less, and the school roll was too large for the room. Therefore, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June, 1908, a grant of £250 was given for the purpose of building a new school in Purangi (total cost estimated to be around £405). The school was to be built to the familiar, rural school pattern, with dimensions of 22'0" x 17'6", and a porch 17'6" x 8'0".

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1909, Purangi School was opened, after being built by Mr. R.W. Bond, a contractor, in the centre of the reasonably new settlement. At the opening, a concert, supper and dance were held, with the dancing going until daybreak. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and hoped that this was the start of many more social occasions. With the school in a separate building, the front room of the Boarding House was turned into a billiard saloon.

In July 1926, the school caught on fire. Thankfully, there was only interior damage, as the fire was spotted and put out very quickly.

The roll was always small, and attendance relied heavily on weather conditions. When Mr. John Don first started teaching in 1931, he only had one pupil for the first few days, as heavy rain was keeping most of them at home. Another account in 1941 shows only two pupils present because of flooding. The school at this time contained blackboards, a box of chalk, and some raffia as its "equipment",

There are numerous reports from the teachers of the nature-studies the school participated in – indeed, some children could identify up to 60 native plants. The pupils themselves have fond memories of the end-of-year concert and prize giving, where they would each receive a book.



By 1941 the school was opening with a roll number of 9. This diminished to a roll of five by 1947. It is interesting to note that when Purangi School started, many of the pupils were Maori, but that by the end, most were Paheka.

The school closed on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May, 1948, with the remaining pupils attending Matau School. They traveled the four miles there by foot or horseback, until a bus run started in August. The school equipment and furniture was also transferred, although the blackboard, fireplace,

hand basin, cloak bay and vent (for children to get fresh air) are still intact (*see insert picture*).

24 teachers taught at Purangi School during the time it was open, and approximately 228 pupils went through the system.

### **Bibliography**

*Purangi 1891-1991* (Laurel Aitken and Meryl Webb) p44-55  
INL Electronic Text Library