

## Anthem House

17 Lancaster Street, LAWRENCE

<http://www.historic.org.nz/Register/ListingDetail.asp?RID=2242&sm=>

Register Number:2242 Registration Type: Historic Place - Category II Region:Otago

Region Date Registered:2/4/04 City/District Council: Clutha District Council

Status Explanation:Registration includes the building, its fixtures and fittings and land on CTs OT128/206 and OT128/82. The registration includes the original outbuilding associated with the residence. Brief History: The land on which this house was built was originally part of one acre block owned by Blue Spur miner Samuel Hales in the 1870s (OT41/52). Sections 3 and 4 Block VII were transferred to John Joseph Woods in 1902 (OT128/82, OT128/206).

Woods was responsible for setting Thomas Bracken's lyrics "God Defend New Zealand" to music.

Woods was born in Tasmania in 1849. He moved to New Zealand where he taught in private schools, music being his specialty. In 1874 he transferred to the Roman Catholic St Patrick's Church School in Lawrence as headmaster. In September 1874 he married assistant teacher at the school widow Mrs Conway. They both continued teaching at the school until 1876.

In 1877 he left teaching and became County Clerk and Treasurer to the newly established Tuapeka County Council in Lawrence. He held this position for 55 years, and was made an Honourable Freeman of Lawrence in recognition of his service.

Woods had a wide range of interests. He could play twelve instruments and was an especially accomplished violinist. He was a keen sportsman and had close links to the Roman Catholic Church in Lawrence, and conducted the choir.

On 1 July 1876 the Dunedin newspaper the Saturday Advertiser published Thomas Bracken's verses "God Defend New Zealand" and invited readers to set them to music as a national air or anthem. Twelve entries were received, and Wood's entry was chosen as the winner. Later recounting his composition to publisher A.H. Reed, he remembered: "I immediately felt like one inspired...I set to work instanter and never left my seat till the music was completely finished late on in the night."

The anthem was probably first played at Lawrence, but its first formal public performance was at Dunedin's Queen's Theatre on Christmas Day 1876. The music was soon published and was eventually presented to Queen Victoria by Richard John Seddon as New Zealand's anthem. Bracken assigned all rights to Woods. The rights were later acquired by Charles Begg and Co. In 1940 the Government purchased the rights.

The prosperity of the Borough and of Wood's own standing are reflected in the house on the corner of Lismore and Lancaster Streets. The Tuapeka Times described it on completion:

For beauty of finish, excellence of situation and picturesqueness of design, the seven-roomed house erected by Mr J.J. Woods...should satisfy the most exacting or fastidious. Apparently neither expense nor trouble has been spared in securing

comfort, as well as every modern convenience.

Among the modern conveniences were the bathroom and scullery which each had "the latest improved taps and both are provided with large china washbasins.

The description notes the cast iron finials and scrolls which helped set off the architectural lines of the building and the veranda fretwork and brackets. The description ended by noting the prominent site of the house - it "commands and extending view of the country stretching away towards the Lammerlaws, whilst the natural drainage must be perfect, and the situation is generally of the healthiest."

The healthy site must have benefited Woods as he retired at 83 in 1932. He died in 1934.

After his death the house was owned briefly by his daughter Mary Woods, before being transferred to Lawrence butcher James Barr in August 1938. In 1944 the property changed hands again, this time to Nellie Brown, wife of Lawrence Stock and Station agent Ebenezer Brown. In the 1950s it passed to Wright Stephenson and Co. Ltd which owned it for the next twenty years. In 1971 the property was owned by J.B.W. Rowe Contracting Ltd (OT128/206 OT128/82)

In the late 1970s there was renewed enthusiasm for the historical values of the property and it became known as "Anthem House." A plaque was unveiled in 1977 recording J.J. Woods contribution to the district as well as his composition of the national anthem. Current Use: Residential buildings and associated places - House  
Former Uses: Residential buildings and associated places - House

Construction Dates: Original Construction: 1902

Modification - Interior alterations and renovations.: c.1980s

Construction Professionals: Moody - Architect

Moody - Builder

Other Information: A fully referenced version of this report is available from the NZHPT Southern Region Office (Dunedin). Entry Written By: Heather Bauchop Entry Completed: 7/9/04 Information Sources: W.R. Mayhew, Tuapeka: The Land and Its People: A Social History of the Borough of Lawrence and its Surrounding Districts, Otago Centennial Historical Publications, Dunedin, 1949

Otago Daily Times, 28 January 1977

NZHPT File

Southland Times, 8 January 1977

John McIndoe, Tuapeka Fields: A Tribute to A Golden Past - Commemorating the 125th Anniversary of the Discovery of Gold at Gabriels Gully, Dunedin, 1985 [first published: Daphne Lemon, The Stars in Orion, 1979]

Tuapeka Times, 17 December 1902