

Heritage (Decision about Registration of the Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler) Notice 2022*

Notifiable instrument NI2022–303

made under the

Heritage Act 2004, s 40 (Decision about registration)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Heritage (Decision about Registration of the Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler) Notice 2022*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after its notification day.

3 Decision about registration

On 2 June 2022, the ACT Heritage Council (the *Heritage Council*) decided to register the Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler (the *Object*).

4 Registration details of the Object

The registration details of the Object are in the schedule.

5 Reasons for the decision

The Heritage Council is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the Object has heritage significance as it meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria in section 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*. A detailed statement of reasons including an assessment against the heritage significance criteria is provided in the schedule.

6 Date registration takes effect

The registration of the Object takes effect on 2 June 2022.

*Name amended under Legislation Act, s 60

7 Revocation

The *Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler) Notice 2022 (NI2022—75)* is revoked.

Edwina Jans
A/g Secretary (as delegate for)
ACT Heritage Council
2 June 2022



ACT Heritage Council

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
HERITAGE REGISTER
(Registration)

For the purposes of s 40 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, an entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following object:

SHUMACK STONE HUT SCHOOL SAMPLER

HALL SCHOOL MUSEUM AND HERITAGE CENTRE, FORMER HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, BLOCK 3, SECTION 6, HALL

DATE OF REGISTRATION

2 June 2022 Notifiable Instrument: 2022–

Copies of the Register Entry are available for inspection at ACT Heritage. For further information please contact:

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Telephone 13 22 81

This statement refers to the location of the object as required in s 12 (b) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

LOCATION OF THE OBJECT

The Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler is located in the collections of the Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre, which occupies premises at the former Hall Primary School on Palmer Street, Hall (Block 3, Section 6, Hall).

This statement refers to the description of the object as required in s 12 (c) of the *Heritage Act 2004*. The attributes described in this section form part of the heritage significance of the object.

DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT

This object is an embroidered textile sampler dating to 1887. It was created by Margaret Shumack while a student at the Stone Hut School. The embroidery is stitched in woollen thread on a plain weave linen ground fabric. Image 1 shows the sampler, including its design. At the top of the sampler there are four variations of alphabets. The uppermost alphabet, along with the numbers 1-9, are stitched in red thread, with the remaining three alphabets stitched in green thread under this. Below the alphabets, there is wording embroidered in green thread, which reads:

Margaret Shumack
Public School
Stone Hut
9th August 1887

At the bottom of the sampler are images of birds, trees and a basket embroidered in green, red and yellow thread. The whole is surrounded by a stitched border and several dividing lines composed of different patterns and stitching types.

This statement refers to the heritage significance of the object as required in s 12 (d) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler is an example of a 19th Century sampler made at a location now situated within the ACT. The inclusion of the alphabet and numerals are characteristic of marking samplers made by young girls during their educational studies. In this case, the alphabets have been stitched four times in different styles. The name of the maker, school and date are all included as part of the design thus linking this object to a specific person, time and place. School samplers, which were only required to be made by girls, are representative of the socio-cultural importance of needlework in the lives of women and girls in 19th Century colonial NSW.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE

The guiding conservation objective is that the Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler shall be conserved and appropriately managed in a manner respecting its heritage significance.

The ACT Heritage Council may adopt heritage guidelines applicable to the object under s 25 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

For further information on guidelines applicable to the object, or for advice on proposed works or development, please contact ACT Heritage on 13 22 81.

REASON FOR REGISTRATION

The Council has assessed the Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against the heritage significance criteria and is satisfied that the object is likely to have heritage significance when assessed against criteria [a, b, d] under s 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The Council's assessment against the criteria specified in s 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004* is as follows.

In assessing the heritage significance of the Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler, the Council considered:

- the original nomination and documentary evidence supplied by the nominator;
- the Council's *Heritage Assessment Policy* (March 2018);
- information provided by an inspection on 29 July 2021 by ACT Heritage;
- the report by ACT Heritage titled, *Background Information Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler*, June 2022, containing photographs and information on history, description, condition and integrity; and

Pursuant to s 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, a place or object has heritage significance if it satisfies one or more of the following criteria. Future research may alter the findings of this assessment.

(a) importance to the course or pattern of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

The Council has assessed Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against criterion (a) and is satisfied that the object is likely to meet this criterion.

This object is important to the course of women and children's history in the ACT, as well as the history of schools and education in 19th Century colonial NSW in an area that subsequently became part of the ACT. The association between women and needlework were closely entwined in socio-cultural expectations of the 19th Century, which in turn contributed to the status of the household. This sampler can also be linked to the ACT region through the maker Margaret Shumack (clearly identified in the composition of the needlework design) as a member of a prominent family in the early development of Canberra and that it furthermore identifies the Stone Hut Public School, a locale now situated within the ACT. In 1887, the Stone Hut School was a public school in the colonial NSW education system. It was no longer located in the eponymous stone hut, but in a wooden building situated across the road from the original school. Not long after, in 1888, the school was renamed Gungahleen.

(b) has uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

The Council has assessed Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against criterion (b) and is satisfied that the object is likely to meet this criterion.

This object is an example of a sampler created by a young girl, Margaret Shumack, as part of her official schooling in 1887 at a time when compulsory schooling was a relatively new requirement in colonial NSW. Although other girls at schools within the region presumably created similar samplers there are no other known examples held in publicly accessible collections. It is thus a rare object in the regional context. The sampler is representative of the requirements and expectations for girls at that time and the social and cultural role that this activity reflects.

(c) potential to yield important information that will contribute to an understanding of the ACT's cultural or natural history;

The Council has assessed Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against criterion (c) and is not satisfied that the object is likely to meet this criterion.

Although this object represents the ACT's cultural history and there are no other known examples of similar objects in public collections, it is unlikely that there is any further potential for physical evidence relating to a research topic that is not already evident in the appearance of the object.

(d) importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or objects;

The Council has assessed Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against criterion (d) and is satisfied that the object is likely to meet this criterion.

After education became compulsory for all children in colonial NSW in 1880, all girls were required to do needlework as part of their educational curriculum, thus producing one or more embroidered samplers. The inclusion of the alphabet and numerals arranged in rows are characteristic of educational 'band' or 'marking' samplers. Not only did this demonstrate the child's knowledge of letters and numerals, but the application of these using needlework was also intended to have practical applications in stitching identification onto clothes and other fabric items. This was considered to be important for the girl in later life when it was expected that, as a woman, she would manage the household. The expectation that girls would learn needlework and the consequent production of educational samplers reflects the prevalent socio-cultural expectations relating to the role of women and girls in 19th Century society. The name of the maker, school and date are also typical inclusions in educational samplers, which also aid in linking this specific object to a unique individual, time and place.

(e) importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by the ACT community or a cultural group in the ACT;

The Council has assessed Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against criterion (e) and is not satisfied that the object is likely to meet this criterion.

This sampler is representative of aesthetic characteristics that were once common, but of which there are few surviving examples in the ACT. The distinctive arrangement of band samplers, of which this is a clear example, developed in line with the shift from samplers being produced by specialised artisans to teaching tools for young girls. Samplers at this time also became squarer and showed more variation in the needlework, which made them more suitable for display. The display of the item would show off the girls' developing skills at a time when needlework was considered an important skill for women in society. This sampler includes many elements that were common in educational samplers, such as repeated patterns, alphabets and personalised decorative elements. It clearly was created with the aesthetic values of its time in mind however it is not possible to demonstrate that these aesthetic characteristics are valued by the community or a cultural group in the ACT at this time.

This item was in the private collection of the local Shumack family members before it was donated to the Canberra District Historical Society (CDHS). While in the collections of CDHS it was displayed to the public at Blundell's Cottage and at the National Capital Exhibition. More recently it was transferred to the collections of the Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre. With the limited

public exposure that the object has received to date it is difficult to argue that the aesthetic characteristics are valued by the broader ACT community, but after conservation and with the potential for increased exposure to the broader community this criterion may be re-assessed in the future.

(f) importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement for a particular period;

The Council has assessed Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against criterion (f) and is not satisfied that the object is likely to meet this criterion.

Although this object clearly demonstrates creative expression within the societal expectations of the period, it does not demonstrate exceptionality when considered within the context in which it was produced. All girls at that time would have been expected to produce a needlework sampler of a similar standard and the design elements clearly reflect a societal norm, not a distinctive or exceptional creative achievement.

(g) has a strong or special association with the ACT community, or a cultural group in the ACT for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;

The Council has assessed Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against criterion (g) and is not satisfied that the object is likely to meet this criterion.

There is no evidence at present to demonstrate the association between this object and a broad spectrum of the ACT community, nor an identified cultural group.

(h) has a special association with the life or work of a person, or people, important to the history of the ACT.

The Council has assessed Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler against criterion (h) and is not satisfied that the object is likely to meet this criterion.

This object clearly identifies the maker, Margaret Shumack, who was a young schoolgirl at the time it was created in 1887. Margaret's family were relatively early settlers in the region that later became part of the ACT. Her grandparents, John and Margaret Shumack, migrated to Australia in 1841. Many of their family members also migrated adding to the large extended family of Shumack's in Australia from the mid-19th Century. However, Margaret was not prominent in shaping the history of the ACT, rather the importance of this object lies in the normalcy that it represents. As such, it reflects Margaret's role as a girl (and later a woman) in ACT society at that time.

OBJECT IMAGE



Image 1 - Shumack Stone Hut School Sampler