

HALCOMBE WAR MEMORIAL – intersection Stanway Road and Willoughby Street, Halcombe



Architect: Unknown

Construction date: 1921

Visible materials: Cement rendered concrete plinth, granite shaft

Architectural style: Obelisk

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2016

Heritage New Zealand listing: Category 2

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹

Introduction

The Halcombe War Memorial has been the subject of a book – *Halcombe Heroes: World War One* compiled by Sarah Rolston, and published in 2015. This book identifies the First World War men named on the war memorial. However, it does not record the history of the war memorial itself.² The memorial's history is, however, covered briefly in the book *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District*, compiled by Peter Olsen and Janet Doyle, published in 2014. The following study expands on these.

Background

It seems likely that the establishment of this particular war memorial will have provided quite a lot of healing in this ethnically diverse town and district. As well as a significant Maori community living nearby on the Te Reu Reu Reserve, Halcombe and the rural area around it, was also settled in the 1870s by a number of immigrant families from the old German Confederation. From the time of WWI,

¹ Olsen, P., Doyle, J., *Communities Remember World War One*, 2014, page 31

² Sarah Rolston, *Halcombe Heroes: World War One* (Feilding, 2015)

some of these people preferred to identify with their Polish heritage – however, to outsiders (descendants of British immigrants etc.) even the Polish families were largely viewed as being the enemy Germans during WWI – along with the families who actually were of German origin. Despite this, the young men from these families who went overseas and who sometimes died there, were likely to be grandchildren of the original (adult) immigrants, and so the homeland they identified with was New Zealand. This did not, however, deter the most aggressive of onlookers. Especially annoying to those people were the three German Lutheran churches in the vicinity, those at Marton, Rongotea and Halcombe. As a result, the parishioners soon stopped conducting their religious services in their native tongue. By the time the war ended, the Rongotea Lutheran parsonage³ and the Halcombe Lutheran Church⁴ had been destroyed in arson attacks (on 2 July 1917 and 16 July 1917 respectively). Finally, on 5 February 1922, the Rongotea Lutheran Church also succumbed to an arson attack.⁵ Attempts were also made to burn down the Marton Lutheran Church, but these had been thwarted by having the building constantly guarded. It still survives today.⁶

In 1920, one M.P. described the Halcombe German community as having been “*one seething mass of hostility*” toward the wider community during the war. He had felt that the whole lot should have been interned during the war. It is hard to imagine how else Halcombe’s Germanic community might have felt, given the new aggression against them.⁷ Although mass internment was beyond the means and inclination of the NZ Government, they would at least have found an old acquaintance at the internment camp had they been interned – as the former Stanway schoolmaster, who doubtless had taught some of the younger members of this community (now Major Dugald Matheson), was the erratic and mentally unstable commandant of the Somes Island Internment Camp.⁸



UNVEILING OF HALCOMBE WAR MEMORIAL, 1921.

Figure 1 Unveiling the Halcombe War Memorial on 27 July 1921. The Halcombe Post Office is in the background. (Source: Manawatu District Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/assets/display/17749-max>)

³ *Manawatu Times*, 3 July 1917, p. 5

⁴ *Feilding Star*, 16 July 1917, p. 3

⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 6 February 1922, p. 5

⁶ Val Burr, *German-ating the Seeds of Anger: The Great War’s impact on Germans in Manawatu and Rangitikei* (B.A.[Hons.] History Research Exercise, Massey University, 1996), p. 26-27

⁷ Val Burr, *German-ating the Seeds of Anger*, p. 24

⁸ Val Burr, *Somes Island Internment Camp for Enemy Aliens during the First World War: An Historical Enquiry* (A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements of a Master of Arts in History with Honours, at Massey University, 1998), pp. 183-185

The book *Halcombe Heroes: World War One* (pp. 55-56) points to confusion over just who “W. Tua” was, as shown on the WWI section of the memorial, as no-one of that name had been found. However updated information on Auckland War Memorial Museum’s ‘Cenotaph’ website identifies him as Whakamarau Tuawaerenga, also known as James Tua (Service No. 16/480), who had been born in Marton on 16 October 1893. However, he had been living in the King Country at the time of his enlistment.⁹

The First Eighty Years

The Halcombe War Memorial, like the others around the country, had been paid for by its local community.¹⁰ It was duly unveiled by Major William Henry McLean, M.C. on 27th July 1921.¹¹ McLean had been a Feilding schoolteacher before his military service in WWI. He sailed for the Middle East in 1916 as commander of the 10th Reinforcements, Wellington Infantry Battalion, B Company, having been promoted to major shortly before departure.¹²

The following information on the unveiling ceremony comes from an unsourced newspaper clipping¹³ – probably the *Feilding Star* of 28 July 1921. The article begins:

“To the glory of God and in memory of the soldiers of the district who lost their lives in the Great War, a memorial was unveiled at Halcombe yesterday. In fine, though cold, weather there was a large and representative gathering. The monument, which is obelisk in form, is of polished granite, on a concrete base. It stands in the centre of the street, opposite the Post Office, and will always be a conspicuous reminder of the war and its toll on the budding manhood of the district.

“Mr J. Morrison presided over the gathering, and in his opening address stated that the memorial cost £246, and the sundry expenses added £10. The total amount collected was £249, and the balance required would soon be forthcoming, he felt sure. The whole sum had come from the Raumanga and Rangitaua ridings of the Oroua country. The settlers should and did all recognise what they owed to those who had fought and died for the Empire. Mr Morrison thanked the people for the liberal way in which they had assisted the committee in the matter.”

The Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican ministers then began the proceedings, followed by the unveiling itself:

“Major W.H. McLean, M.C., was then called on to unveil the memorial. He thanked the committee for asking him to perform this ceremony, and congratulated the people of the district on their enterprise in putting up such a suitable memorial. They would be present at this function with mixed feelings. With some there would be pride at seeing the names of relatives on the monument, yet it meant tearing open of old wounds. They would remember the strain during the war, the anxious waiting and the fear of getting the sad news of the death of a son or brother. The soldiers knew that the strain was greater on the people in New Zealand than on the soldiers themselves, because they knew they were not always in the trenches. The strain came on the soldiers during the time when the epidemic swept through New Zealand just after the Armistice, when they had the fear of hearing that some relative had passed away. These men, he asked them to remember, had died in no mean cause, and they were members of no mean army. The British Army was a wonderful one, and the New Zealand Division had pulled their weight. They were second to none, making a great reputation on the field and

⁹ ‘Cenotaph’: Auckland War Memorial Museum: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C15965>. Also Rolston, pp. 55-56. (Note that the other alternative Rolston suggested, Private Te Whatu Tua, appears to have survived the war. The date Rolston suggested for his death, was in fact the date both Tuas sailed from Wellington bound for Gallipoli.)

¹⁰ *Auckland Star*, 28 July 1921, p. 4. This is also recorded on the memorial.

¹¹ *Manawatu Times*, 28 July 1921, p. 4

¹² *Feilding Star*, 26 February 1916, p. 3; ‘Cenotaph’, Auckland War Memorial Museum: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C64546>

¹³ Halcombe Community & Districts: http://www.halcombcommunity.co.nz/uploads/2/2/4/3/22439880/anzac_day_historic_article.pdf

off. Those whom they remembered this day had set a high and noble example. In spite of the Disarmament Conferences and Leagues of Nations, there would always be wars, though the soldiers who saw the waste and devastation of it all, hated it. The example set by the soldiers commemorated would be an inspiration to others when the call came.

“Major McLean then unveiled the memorial, with the words: To the glory of God and in loving and everlasting memory of the men of this district who gave up their lives in the Great War, 1914-1918.”

Next to speak was the local MP, the Hon. D.H. Guthrie, who had also spent the preceding few days visiting soldier settlements around the North Island¹⁴:

“The Hon. D.H. Guthrie, M.P., Minister of Lands, accepted it as a privilege to be present at this gathering, arranged to honour the names of those boys who fought in the war. From this district 86 had gone away, and they had done their duty nobly and well, and 15 had lost their lives. These would always have their names honoured. When the call came to New Zealand, it was responded to quickly, and over 100,000 men had gone to face the greatest dangers and they had never flinched. Sixteen thousand had lost their lives, and their names would forever remain green with us. Referring to the work of the Repatriation Department, the Minister said 9,118 soldiers had been placed on the land, and over 9,600 had been assisted to get homes of their own. Every possible care had been and was being taken of the wounded and maimed men. The Repatriation Department had done a wonderful work, 78,000 names being on their records. The Government would not let the soldier settlers go down so long as they were triers. Of the returned men, the Department had found employment for 24,192 who needed advice or assistance. Mr Guthrie referred to the fact that many years ago he had been a teacher at Halcombe school, and he saw on the memorial names of families who were represented at the school in his day. He hoped these names would always be remembered with honour.”

The next speaker was *“Mr H. Pryce (who) referred to the gathering as the most solemn in the history of Halcombe, and said he had been asking himself what was the prevailing feeling in his own mind. Was it sadness, or pride, or exaltation, or sympathy for the relatives of the fallen soldiers? These dead heroes had passed on to those remaining duties to perform. That was one feeling he had. The soldiers had saved the country from slavery and from industrial chaos. It was for the living not to fail the dead. Mr Pryce thought the memorial should appeal specially to the children, and he suggested that every child should memorise the names on it. The example of the fallen men should press on the children the love of their country.”*

Peter Olsen and Janet Doyle's book *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (p. 31) states that a copy of the programme for the unveiling ceremony is held in the Feilding & Districts' Community Archive. In addition to stating that Major McLean was to do the unveiling, it added that an address was given to be given by John Morrison, and that the music was provided by the Halcombe band.¹⁵ John Morrison was a prominent local farmer, a member of the Oroua County Council, and also involved with the Halcombe Brass Band.¹⁶ A brief search on the background of John Morrison – of Tokorangi, Halcombe - suggests that he could have been likely to have been one of the prime movers toward erecting this memorial. However, he had sold his farm there in 1920, and a community farewell for him in February 1920 outlines his extensive contributions. He subsequently moved to Whanganui, but clearly he visited Halcombe on this important day.¹⁷

¹⁴ *NZ Herald*, 23 July 1921, p.10

¹⁵ Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014). Olsen & Doyle's reference for the programme is "Programme – FDCA Collection – Ref. MDC. 2009.22.57.03"

¹⁶ *Feilding Star*, 13 June 1914, p. 2, also *Feilding Star*, 6 September 1919, p. 2 (John Morrison had previously stood as the Liberal candidate against Hon. D.H. Guthrie for the Oroua Electorate)

¹⁷ *Feilding Star*, 12 February 1920, p. 2, 14 February 1920, p. 2, 17 February 1920, p. 2, 15 May 1920, p. 2

Following the Second World War, another nine names joined the names of the original ones on another face of the memorial – at least four of these men being from the local Maori community.¹⁸ In 1950, the Halcombe Memorial Hall was also dedicated as a memorial to the men killed in both world wars.¹⁹

On 2 July 1982, the memorial was given a Category Two listing with the NZ Historic Places Trust (now Heritage New Zealand).²⁰

In 1997, a company named 'In Deep Productions' contacted Manawatu District Council seeking permission to film a Tui commercial in Halcombe, and to put a fake statue over the existing memorial, where the fake statue was pointing to the nearby Halcombe Hotel. The intention was to pretend that three gasping actors approaching it, head to the pub in search of a drink of Tui beer. It was not apparent what the outcome of the request was.²¹

Throughout the first seven decades of its existence, the memorial sat in the middle of the intersection with only roadway around it. However, by 1998, the local community had decided that there was a need to slow down the traffic passing through the town. Vehicles were speeding down the Stanway Hill and into the town, and there had been one or two nasty accidents. The result was the installation of the present roundabout surrounding the war memorial.²²

Recent Years

As the centenary of the First World War approached, a decision was made to research and publish the stories of the men from that war who are named on this memorial and also on the school memorial. The *Manawatu Standard*, of 18th May 2012, then published an article entitled: 'Honouring Halcombe's heroes'

An annual grant of \$2700 from Manawatu District Council and the 2014 Gallipoli centenary have prompted Halcombe Community Committee to research the names on the Halcombe School memorial archway and the cenotaph in the village.

Sarah Rolston has set herself the task of tracing the names of soldiers whose names are recorded on the two memorials, and try to source photographs of as many as possible.

The annual grant to community councils is to be used by community committees for a project such as this one, signs or seats which the community consider will benefit their community.

"The idea of producing a booklet with photos of the soldiers and a little about each one, was prompted by a similar project undertaken by George Kereama for Maori Battalion soldiers. Researching local soldiers in the Feilding Library, I came across a book by the Feilding Agricultural High School Old Pupils Association in 1948 which lists a number of the same names, which has given me a head start."

One of those former pupils was Hamuera Paul Te Punga, who had been dux of the school, a rugby hero and was training as a lawyer when he enlisted. He left New Zealand with the Maori Battalion in 1939, and returned but then went back and held the rank of Major when he was killed in Italy on September 23, 1944.

"He was easy to research, because he was well known. But other soldiers will be harder to find out about. Some will still have family in the area, but others may not be known now, particularly WW1 soldiers. The Crozier brothers were also in the book, but less was known about them."

Mrs Rolston has some information about 11 of the names, but would be interested to hear more of their stories.

¹⁸ Note that the two books that cover the memorial focus on WWI only. In fact the monument itself is the source of the WWII information.

¹⁹ Olsen & Doyle, p. 32

²⁰ Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1201>

²¹ Manawatu District Council: File 4/3513, 'Memorials - Heritage Management - General

²² *Manawatu Standard*, 4 February 1998, p. 2

She intends to make use of the Manawatu District Community Archives to search for more information about the names on the memorials, and has been given a few names of people who may have more information.

Mrs Rolston describes herself as an adopted New Zealander, and her knowledge of New Zealand's military history is very limited. She said finding out about these soldiers is intriguing.

"Some names are listed on both memorials, such as J Cuff, yet WM Cuff is only listed on the cenotaph and not at the school. Maybe that means he was an older brother, cousin or uncle who did not attend Halcombe school. It would be interesting to hear those stories."

Among the names on the memorials known to be still in the area is Natzske (since changed to Nitschke), Cowdrey, Te Whare, Gotty, Wapp and Sandilands.

"At the Halcombe Anzac service this year I was told the first soldier to die at Gallipoli was from Halcombe. I would really like to know more about that," Mrs Rolston said.

There are 40 names listed on the two arches and Mrs Rolston would be grateful for any information about these soldiers.

They are 1914-18: C Clapham, L Clover, J Cuff, W M Cuff, N Hogg, R Linton, W Linton, A Palmer, C Phillips, C C Seigel, J A Seigel, F Voss, C Wapp, H Wishnowsky, L M Natzske, M H Hogg, A Cowdrey, R Fearon, J Hammond, W McDonald, A Neilson, P Roberts, W Tua.

1939-45: W Clapham, L Calman, A Crozier, N Crozier, P Elliott, A Gillon, J Neilson, J P O'Dea, B Sandilands, F Boddington, E Campbell, J H Davey, D Gotty, B Hogg, T Rewai, P Te Punga, J Te Whare.

If photographs of the soldiers can be obtained, the intention is to reproduce, frame and hang them in a public space within the village, possibly the rugby clubrooms or the school hall.²³

The book was duly published in 2015.



Figure 2 The Halcombe War Memorial photographed in about 1986 by Jock Phillips or Chris Maclean – probably for their book *The sorrow and the pride: New Zealand war memorials*, published in 1990. (Source: 'Halcombe war memorial' : <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/halcombe-war-memorial>)

²³ *Manawatu Standard*, 18 May 2012: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/your-manawatu/feilding-herald/6945111/Honouring-Halcombes-heroes>

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial has a black granite obelisk on a red/brown stone pedestal, which in turn stands on a three-stepped painted cement rendered plinth. The obelisk comprises three major sections: a chamfered pedestal, a lower shaft, a four-faced pediment and the obelisk above.

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare²⁴.

Many war memorials were located so that they were highly visible, usually at a cross roads or a major public roads. In this case, the memorial is located at the intersection of two streets in the small township of Halcombe. Opposite to the south-east is the former Post Office and to the north west is the Halcombe Hotel.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2016 for this memorial is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember soldiers who were killed in World Wars 1 and 2.

The memorial has **high authenticity** with little visible change to the structure.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in World Wars 1 and 2 and where memorial services have been held.

SOURCES

Printed Sources

Manawatu Standard (Hard copy as per footnotes)

²⁴ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

Rolston, Sarah, *Halcombe Heroes: World War One* (Feilding, 2015)

Online Sources

'Cenotaph': Auckland War Memorial Museum: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/> (as per footnotes)

Google Streetview: www.google.co.nz (as per footnote)

Halcombe Community & Districts website: 'Halcombe History':

<http://www.halcombecommunity.co.nz/history.html> & also the unsourced unveiling article from 1921 in 'Anzac Day':

http://www.halcombecommunity.co.nz/uploads/2/2/4/3/22439880/anzac_day_historic_article.pdf

'Halcombe war memorial': <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/halcombe-war-memorial>

Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1201>

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Auckland Star*, *Feilding Star*, *Manawatu Standard*, *Manawatu Times*, *NZ Herald*): (as per footnotes and text)

Other Sources

Burr, Val, *German-ating the Seeds of Anger: The Great War's impact on Germans in Manawatu and Rangitikei* (B.A. [Hons.] History Research Exercise, Massey University, 1996)

Burr, Val, *Somes Island Internment Camp for Enemy Aliens during the First World War: An Historical Enquiry* (A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements of a Master of Arts in History with Honours, at Massey University, 1998)

Manawatu District Council: File 4/3513, 'Memorials - Heritage Management - General'; Feilding Public Library (as per photo caption)

FEILDING WAR MEMORIAL – Manchester Square, Feilding



Architect: Not known

Construction date: 1923

Visible materials: Basalt steps and plinth, grey granite pedestal, marble angel statue, yew hedge, brick edging to flower garden, black granite and bronze plaques

Architectural style: Stone masonry pedestal with angel

Use/building type: War memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2016

Heritage New Zealand listing: Category 2

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹

Outline history

“A conference of delegates from the outlying counties and other interested parties met on June 27 1919 and decided they would not have a combined memorial in Feilding”. Many ideas were canvassed as to what an appropriate memorial would be. The unveiling ceremony was held on Wednesday 3 October 1923 with Governor General Viscount Jellicoe unveiling the memorial and laying a wreath. The Mayor and Major W. H. Mclean MC gave speeches.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial has a basalt plinth with four steps on the west side, leading to a square, stepped, granite pedestal on a rough-hewn granite pedestal. Above the cornice of the pedestal is a curved cap on which is the white marble female figure, possibly an angel, with wings and a sword. Angels were seen

¹ Olsen, P., Doyle, J., *Communities Remember World War One*, 2014

as representing God or as the protector of the living and dead while female figures represented victory of motherhood. Bronze plaques have been added since the original construction. These include:

Bronze plaques have been added since the original construction. These include:

- the 50th anniversary of VE Day on 9 May 1995;
- the 50th anniversary of VJ day on 15 August 1995;
- a memorial to those who served in Korea, Malaya, Borneo, Vietnam and United Nations peace keeping operations;
- a memorial to Lt. T.A. O'Donnell DSD, who died in Afghanistan on 3 August 2010

A yew hedge surrounds the plinth, which has brick edging. The yew is symbolic of immortality.

About one third of all WWI memorials were based on the obelisk design, while gates and arches were the next most common. Fewer memorials included marble human figures, while domed cupolas and crosses were rare².

The memorial is located at the centre of the north-east quadrant of Feilding's Square. Brick paths cut across the large grassed quadrant to the memorial and rose beds surrounding it. The Boer War memorial is to the north and the clock tower on a central traffic island of the Square is to its west.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2016 for this building is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate representativeness, rarity, architectural** and **technological** values but **high group** values being illustrative in general design and use of materials of the many structures erected as war memorials throughout New Zealand. The design follows the less common form of memorial with an ornate marble statue of an angel or woman with a sword at the top of the column, representing victory, motherhood or the protector of the living and dead. Granite and basalt were coming materials for the shafts of these memorials.

The memorial appears to have **high** levels of **authenticity** with the minor modifications of the addition of small plaques.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern** and **cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in World War 1 with subsequent plaques added commemorating later wars and peace keeping activities.

SOURCES

Former NZHPT Manawatu Branch Committee files

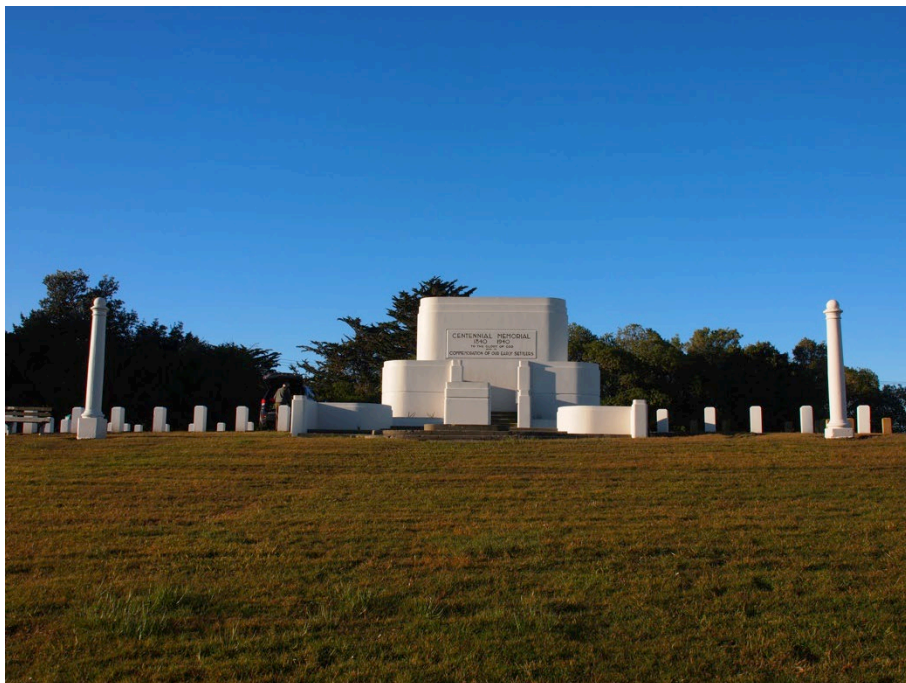
² <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

Paperspast

Te Ara Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, online

Olsen, Peter, Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One, Memorials of the Manawatu District*, Janet Doyle, Feilding, 2015

MOUNT STEWART MEMORIAL – 7 Mount Stewart - Halcombe Road



Designer: H. V. Bond, engineer to the Manawatu County Council

Construction date: 1940

Visible materials: Cement rendered concrete, galvanised steel handrails

Architectural style: Moderne

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2016

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The Mount Stewart Early Settlers' Memorial was officially unveiled on Saturday, 20th April 1940, as part of New Zealand's centennial celebrations. It was then upgraded and re-dedicated in 1990, as part of New Zealand's sesquicentennial activities. The memorial is located on the Mt. Stewart Reserve, overlooking State Highway 3.

There are in fact three memorials at the Mount Stewart Reserve. The first is the main early settlers' memorial – which was officially designated as a memorial to the early settlers of the Manawatu-Rangitikei area. Its surviving original signage is that shown on the upper façade. The second is the Sandon Old Boys' Association's memorial to the early settlers of the Sandon area. However, the pedestal of this memorial appears to have been re-used for the plaque installed in 1990 – which makes no mention the Sandon Old Boys' Association. The third is the memorial to John Tiffin Stewart, which was installed alongside the trig station in 1990.¹

¹ This memorial reads: "Mount Stewart, the Initial Station of the Wanganui Meridional Circuit, was named for John Tiffin Stewart 1827-1913. Pioneer surveyor and engineer who, in the years 1858 to 1889 designed and surveyed many of the towns, roads, railways and public works of this district. He kairuri i āroha whanuitia e nga iwi katoa o tenei rohe"

The Mount Stewart Early Settlers' Memorial is believed to be one of only two surviving concrete memorials built to commemorate 100 years of European settlement in New Zealand. The other is the Petone Settlers Museum, which was originally built as a bathing pavilion on the Petone foreshore in 1939 as part of the Wellington Province's centennial activities. That building has a Category 1 listing with Heritage New Zealand.² Other places named such things as parks after the event.



Figure 1 Unveiling the Early Settlers' memorial on Saturday, 20th April 1940. (Source: ID: GTH:ms12, Photographic Collection, Feilding Library: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/16505>)

Background

Although this study focuses on the Mount Stewart site since the First World War, it is noteworthy that the name of the hill (or rise) in pre-European times was 'Piki kotuku' ('Plume of the white heron'). The site at the top of the hill of the memorial itself was named 'Whakaari'. The location subsequently received the name 'Mount Stewart' after the pioneer surveyor, John Tiffen Stewart (1827-1913), and the trig station he established a few metres from the future site of the memorial, became the initial station or reference point for all surveys in the Manawatu-Whanganui area.³

In 1922, when the Palmerston North War Memorial Committee were working at choosing a design for their memorial, one of the committee members, Mr J.M. Johnston, commented that he thought a suggestion made by Mr J.H. Perrett, of Sandon, was an excellent one. Perrett had proposed that a large memorial column be erected on Mount Stewart "where it could be seen for miles from every direction." Johnston considered that it would be more practical to have one big memorial, rather than "a number of small ones at different points." However, another committee member pointed out that

² Petone Settlers Museum: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/206> ; Press: 20 December 1938, p. 12

³ Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc: 'Mount Stewart Memorial,' File No: 100017 (held at Te Manawa, Palmerston North); including a letter dated 7 August 1990, B.C. Stern to Manawatu Regional committee, Historic Places Trust, Palmerston North, re the proposed J.T. Stewart Memorial.

the local returned soldiers preferred to have a column in a more convenient location for the placing of wreaths. For them, a stone cairn at Anzac Park would be more suitable.⁴

One of the earliest newspaper articles located during this study on the plans to erect this particular structure, appeared in the *Evening Post* of 31 May 1935. This stated that:

“Some time ago publicity was given to a suggestion by Mr. A. E. Pearce, of Waituna West, that a monument to the early pioneers of the Manawatu and Rangitikei districts should be erected on the top of Mount Stewart, over which the main north and south, highway runs. From the top of this rise magnificent views are obtained over the surrounding fertile plains, to the sea coast on one side and the foot of the ranges on the other. Away to the south on a fine day can be seen the South Island and to the north Ruapehu. A monument erected on this rise would thus command a view of all the land of the west coast on which the early settlers felled the bush and established their homes.

“At yesterday’s meeting of the Kairanga County Council mention was again made of the proposal, which is to be passed on to the Manawatu County Council, in whose district Mt. Stewart is situated.”⁵

Mr J.H. Perrett was closely connected to the Sandon Old Boys’ Association. His wife’s parents were Sandon School’s original teachers, and he himself was very active in both the local and wider community. He was a Manawatu County Councillor for many years, and was also the Council’s chairman for “*some years.*”⁶ Mr A.E. Pearce was a member of the Association.⁷

In July 1936, Mr J.C. Fagan, president of the Sandon Old Boys’ Association, explained to the group some of the things that had been being undertaken in relation to the proposed Mt. Stewart Memorial. The Manawatu County Council had established a committee to deal with the matter, and the Sandon Old Boys’ group was represented on this committee by Mr W.J. Croucher. Evidently it had originally been the Sandon Old Boys’ Association’s idea about a year earlier, to undertake such a memorial. They had then approached the Manawatu County Council, which had “*been in complete sympathy with the suggestion*”, and which had then formed a sub-committee to look into the matter. Approaches had also been made to the Lands & Survey Dept. for permission to use its land for the memorial. The land had then been cleared, and preparations were now under way to plough it and to sow grass there. Croucher had also compiled a booklet on the matter, and this had generated publicity.⁸

Although the initial intention had been to construct the memorial immediately, the newly formed sub-committee decided to defer the matter and to complete the project in 1940 as part of New Zealand’s centenary celebrations. Meanwhile they would just prepare the grounds. Croucher had not wanted to delay the process – as many elderly people who supported the project had hoped to see it complete in their lifetimes. “*Four years to them was a long time to look forward, and from the point of view of raising funds there was the likely possibility that other national and local projects in connection with the centenary might react to our disadvantage...*” He also worried about the donations already offered or received. He added that: “*Time should be taken by the forelock as monuments do not spring up like mushrooms overnight. Strike while the iron is hot and the spirit willing, for procrastination and needless delay will, it is feared, allow a golden opportunity to be missed.*” Croucher hoped that the decision to delay the monument might be reversed.⁹

⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 4 March 1922, p. 7

⁵ *Evening Post*, 31 May 1935, p. 8

⁶ *Evening Post*, 12 July 1939, p. 8 ‘Obituary’

⁷ *Feilding Star*, 2 July 1912, p. 2

⁸ *Manawatu Standard*, 6 July 1936, p. 6(7)

⁹ *Manawatu Standard*, 6 July 1936, p. 6(7)

A general meeting of the Sandon Old Boys' Association subsequently passed a resolution urging that the Manawatu County Council take steps to ascertain the wishes of residents of the towns and districts interested in the memorial movement, so that the work of organising the memorial might proceed simultaneously with the preparation of the site.¹⁰ Whatever the response was to the Old Boys' resolution, the delay to the completion of the project remained in place.

A meeting on 10 March 1938 between the Feilding Borough Council and the Oroua County Council indicated that both were in support of the project. Amongst the discussion reported from this meeting, was a description of the proposed memorial. *"It would be a concrete tower 40 feet high with a staircase inside leading up to a platform at the top from which sightseers could get a view of the countryside. The tower was to be erected on the spot where the trig station stands and the trig placed on top of the tower. This was important as the trig was the main trig station in the Wellington province and practically every survey this side of the ranges was 'tied' to it."*¹¹

In April 1938, a meeting at Marton of representatives of local bodies, unanimously approved the proposal to commemorate *"the work of the pioneers of this great little country of ours by the erection of a memorial in their honour on Mt. Stewart. In this connection it may be stated that something of this nature had been in contemplation for some years past. In response to overtures from those who were interesting themselves in the matter, the Manawatu County Council, in whose area the site is situated, endorsed the project, and took the preliminary steps involved in clearing and preparing the land in readiness for the public effort which envisaged the co-operation of the six nearby counties. Subsequently a wider proposal was advanced advocating that, in view of the forthcoming centennial celebrations, the effort be made a provincial one rather than a local one."*¹²

Thus in 1938 the central executive of the Wellington region's centenary committee endorsed the inclusion of the proposed Mt. Stewart monument – with its area being allocated the title *"Ward 3 – All the area to the west of the ranges and lying north of Levin to the boundaries of the Taranaki and Auckland provinces."*¹³

The chairman of the provisional committee of Ward 3 was Mr J. Linklater. He explained that Mt. Stewart was a naturally ideal site, being situated almost exactly at the centre of the province, with a *"national highway, traversed by thousands every week, (passing) over its crest. It presents an unsurpassed vista of natural landscape beauties and is within near distance of the larger centres of population within the province, yet, is sufficiently far removed from any particular town that none may claim it as their own, It belongs to all, and, being common property, represents the inheritance of every resident...When the monument is completed it is intended that it will permanently represent the grateful sentiments of every citizen throughout the length and breadth of the Dominion."*¹⁴

Planning for the structure itself could not then be made as this depended on funding, but the suggested amount as at April 1938 was £2,500 for the actual structure, with provision for the cost of laying out the grounds, fencing, entrance gates, preparations for a camping site and other incidentals. *"The suggested structure would be built of reinforced concrete 12ft square and 45ft high, and provides for an internal staircase leading to a lookout at the apex. It will be necessary also to provide a small building nearby that will supply shelter and other conveniences. Voluntary donations of £2,500,*

¹⁰ *Manawatu Standard*, 17 July 1936, p. 8(7)

¹¹ *Feilding Star*, 11 March 1938, in *Feilding Star Scrapbook*, between 1st March 1938 and 31 March 1939: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/18534#idx22153>

¹² *Manawatu Standard*, 13 April 1938, p. 12(2)

¹³ *Manawatu Standard*, 13 April 1938, p. 12(2)

¹⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 13 April 1938, p. 12(2)

carrying a Government subsidy of £1 for every £3 subscribed, will make available a total sum of £3,300.”¹⁵

The committee wanted to create something “really worthwhile”, but added that the design could be adjusted to suit the funding received. Linklater concluded by adding that: “We of the present generation owe our prosperity and our very existence here to the sacrifices of the pathfinders of other days whom we are now taking steps to honour...”¹⁶

Bickering Local Bodies

Soon, however, problems began arising with the financial requests being made upon the various local bodies. Three of these either didn't like the form of the memorial, or that they wished to take no action with it. The Rangitikei County Council preferred a “utility memorial”, while the Ohakune Town Board and the Waimarino County Council wanted nothing to do with it. Foxton Borough Council had decided to take no action with it in the meantime, while Palmerston North City Council decided to leave it until after the upcoming election. Kairanga County Council had not “altogether favourably received” the idea of the project in the absence of definitive information. However, Manawatu County Council and Marton Borough Council “were wholeheartedly behind the scheme”, while KIWITEA County Council had not yet met to discuss the matter. The meeting of the organising committee then explored ways to raise the money – with subscriptions being emphasized where possible.¹⁷

In June 1938, a proposal by the Pohangina County Council was to replace the memorial with a convalescent hospital to be built at Mt. Stewart (then a five acre property). The Pohangina County Council had decided to support the scheme (its share of the contribution being £72 10s 10d); however, the Kairanga and Rangitikei County Councils had decided against contributing to the monument. Thereafter much discussion followed on the virtues of a more useful kind of memorial.¹⁸

At another meeting a few days later, Kairanga County Council, the Taihape Borough Council, Rangitikei County Council and KIWITEA County Council also said that they did not wish to contribute, while Wanganui's mayor had also indicated that his council would be unlikely to participate.¹⁹

In mid-July 1938, the Feilding Borough Council discussed the matter following a letter from Mr W.J. Croucher. Conflicting views on the point of a monument or a ‘useful’ alternative, or a payment by the council as opposed to a subscription list, were bandied about. Some members of the council were concerned that it might have to raid more money than its allocated quota (of \$87), due to the other councils dropping out. Similar conflicting views occurred at the Oroua County Council's meeting, after receiving a copy of the same letter. It decided to open a subscription list to pay its share of its quota.²⁰

The editorial in the *Manawatu Standard* of 16 February 1939 presented its take on some sad news:

“It is to be regretted that the authorities have abandoned the proposal to place a memorial on Mt. Stewart to the pioneers of this country. It was one of three adopted as a centennial recognition of the conspicuous part played by the men and women in the Dominion's earliest development. The landing of the first colonists at Petone Beach was to be commemorated by a memorial there, and Edward Gibbon Wakefield's memory honoured by a monument on Mt. Victoria, Wellington.

“For their consumption the province was divided into three wards, Wellington city and the territory reaching to Levin to be responsible for the Wakefield memorial, the Hutt and the Wairarapa

¹⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 13 April 1938, p. 12(2)

¹⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 13 April 1938, p. 12(2)

¹⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 27 April 1938, p. 8(8)

¹⁸ *Manawatu Standard*, 11 June 1938, p. 13(5)

¹⁹ *Manawatu Standard*, 14 June 1938, p. 11(3)

²⁰ *Manawatu Standard*, 16 July 1938, p. 3(3-4)

for the Petone Beach plan, and the district from the Manawatu north to the boundaries of the Auckland and Taranaki provinces being entrusted with the Mt. Stewart proposal.

“Various meetings were held to further this latter scheme, but unfortunately beyond this immediate district practically no interest was evinced in it. The committee which took the matter in hand laboured earnestly for its consumption, but apathy – reflected in the fact that out of 400 letters sent to various people and bodies only one reply was received has brought the major scheme to naught.

“The provincial memorial, it is now stated, is to be the Petone Beach scheme, a hall and bathing pavilion costing £10,000. However worthy this may appear in Petone as a tribute to the pioneers’ memory, from a distance it may easily be regarded as a civic amenity the duty of the municipal authority to provide. It is well, though, to take the wider view failing something of a more appealing nature to other districts and accept it as the province’s graceful recognition of the pioneers’ services.

“In the meantime the Mt. Stewart proposal need not be shelved. Before the centennial plans were evolved it was mooted as a tribute to the early colonials of the district, and the money spent by the Manawatu County Council on the site may be regarded as the initial effort towards a district memorial in the future, perhaps one not so elaborate as first proposed. This is something that could be developed and would give immense satisfaction to the descendants of the pioneers of this wide and rich territory.”²¹

In February 1939, the Mayor of Feilding, Mr T.L. Seddon, called a meeting of representatives of many of the surrounding councils, to report back on what the Wellington Provincial Centennial Council had said in relation to planned memorials. That body had passed a resolution that only one provincial memorial be erected in the province – and this was to be the one at Petone. Mr Seddon, therefore, proposed that the Mt. Stewart memorial be regarded as a Manawatu memorial.

Feilding Borough Council was already planning a pavilion at Kowhai Park (£1,200) and Marton Borough Council’s project was a Centennial Park (£1,100). Seddon advised that £30,000 had been approved for local memorials by the Centennial Committee, and councils had to apply for grants from that sum.

Seddon also said that the abovementioned newspaper report of the abandonment of the Mt. Stewart plan had been misleading. It had not been abandoned, but instead it was going to be a district one. It had been planned as a £3,000 memorial, with £750 of this sum coming from the government as a subsidy. However, most local councils remained disinterested, although Marton was prepared to contribute. Manawatu County Council remained the most interested party. In the end, a motion was passed that stated that it had been *“decided that owing to the impracticability of raising the £2,250 involved, a modified scheme, costing not more than £800, replace the original £3,000 proposal, and that the matter be referred to the Mount Stewart Memorial Committee; also that the local bodies interested be communicated with asking for their approval to the modified scheme within a month.”²²*

The Sandon Old Boys’ Association and the Zone E Centennial Committee

In mid-March 1939, another meeting was held to try to resolve things - this time hosted by the Sandon Old Boys’ Association. Evidently the former Mount Stewart Memorial Committee no longer existed. This time the Sandon Old Boys’ Association decided to lead the way toward raising the necessary money to *“complete any undertaking that may be acceptable on Mt. Stewart by which the association will be permanently identified, as distinctive from the district memorial itself.”* The association hoped that by taking the lead itself, that this *“would act as a stimulus to others outside its membership. So that in the near future a monument will be raised which will reflect the real sentiments of all who desire to participate in acknowledging the part played by the pioneers of old.”²³*

²¹ *Manawatu Standard*, 16 February 1939, p. 9(5)

²² *Manawatu Standard*, 17 February 1939, p. 9(3-4)

²³ *Manawatu Standard*, 15 March 1939, p. 11(3)

In mid-May 1939, a meeting of what now was called the Zone E group of the Centennial Exhibition Committee discussed the position of the provisional and local memorials. The various councils were required to contribute toward the provincial memorial (at Petone), based on their populations. Messrs Croucher and Linklater, who had been members of the original Mt. Stewart executive, submitted reports to the meeting, and provided the history of the project, including its disappointments. For example, the Wellington Provincial Committee also caused complications, as had some misleading publicity (such as that the project had been abandoned). Strategising continued and the members of the original Mt. Stewart committee (Croucher, Linklater and Pearce) were co-opted as a subcommittee of the Zone E committee.²⁴

The *Manawatu Standard* of 30 November 1939 (by which time there was also a war to contend with) indicated that things were finally coming together. A meeting of the "*Mt. Stewart Pioneers' Memorial Committee of the Zone E Centennial Celebrations Committee*" had been held at Feilding on November 29th, and this reported that the National Centennial Committee had approved the amended plans for the Mt. Stewart memorial. The plans were the work of Mr H.V. Bond (Manawatu County Council's engineer).²⁵

The inscription for the memorial was to be held over until later, but the Mayor of Feilding, Mr Seddon, commented that he now felt that the memorial was assured. The cost of the memorial had also needed to be amended from £800 to £1,000, but Seddon thought the local bodies would agree to a slightly increased allocation. A picture of the proposed memorial was also to be printed on the subscription lists, which were to be prepared "*in a suitable form for binding as a permanent record of the subscribers who (made) the memorial possible. The lists will record the fact that they are to be retained and deposited in the completed memorial.*" Messrs Bond and Drew were then empowered to call tenders immediately, while the committee was to visit Mt. Stewart and select the exact site. The tentative date for the celebrations at Mt. Stewart was set as 14 April 1940.²⁶

The *Manawatu Standard* of 2 February 1940 reported on a detailed history of the pioneers and the project that had been given by Mr K.W. Dalrymple, chairman of the Rangitikei County Council, and its representative on the Zone E Centennial Committee (and also a descendant of early settlers). This included stating that even though war had broken out, it had been thought advisable to go ahead with the work. He said that the total cost was £1,000 and that Rangitikei's share would be raised by private subscriptions. "*He specially appealed to the descendants of the old settlers. A list of subscribers is to be deposited at the memorial. Subscriptions from pioneers' descendants will be recorded as a family subscription from the pioneer's family.*"²⁷

The Sandon Old Boys' Association also held a meeting in February 1940 to complete the proposals in progress in relation to the memorial. Part of this related to their promised financial contribution, but also they wanted to add something more that was a distinctive feature to acknowledge the early pioneers of the Sandon area. They settled on a direction-indicator – also the work of memorial designer, Mr H.V. Bond, and this was intended to harmonise with the rest of the memorial. Mr Bond described the memorial and said that the brass direction-indicator would be placed on a central pedestal, where it will show the geographic features visible from the hilltop. They also wanted to display a survey plan showing the original sections occupied in the vicinity by the Hutt Small Farm Association that established the adjoining land. They hoped to display this on an inner wall of the structure.²⁸

²⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 19 May 1939, p. 5(1)

²⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 30 November 1939, p. 5(4)

²⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 30 November 1939, p. 5(4)

²⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 2 February 1940, p. 2(8)

²⁸ *Manawatu Standard*, 16 February 1940, p. 2(6)

A meeting of the Zone E District Committee was held on site on 15th February 1940, and Bond's plan for a road leading to the memorial was discussed and approved. A road was to be formed and metalled, and this was to "lead off from the main highway and take a sweep of 15 chains past the memorial to rejoin the highway on the Sandon side of the hill. The question of sealing this road will be decided later. Provision is to be made for cattle stops at each end of the road to the memorial." Native shrubs were also to be planted in due course.²⁹

The memorial was to be floodlit, and Mr Croucher had also hoped that a beacon might be erected. However, the beacon was abandoned due to concern that it might interfere with night flying due to the monument's close proximity to the Ohakea aerodrome. Subscriptions were coming in freely and "the cost of construction was almost in sight." A sub-committee was also set up to plan the formal ceremony, and the committee agreed that the names of the building (Mr W. Wilkinson) and the architect (Mr H.V. Bond) should appear on the monument.³⁰

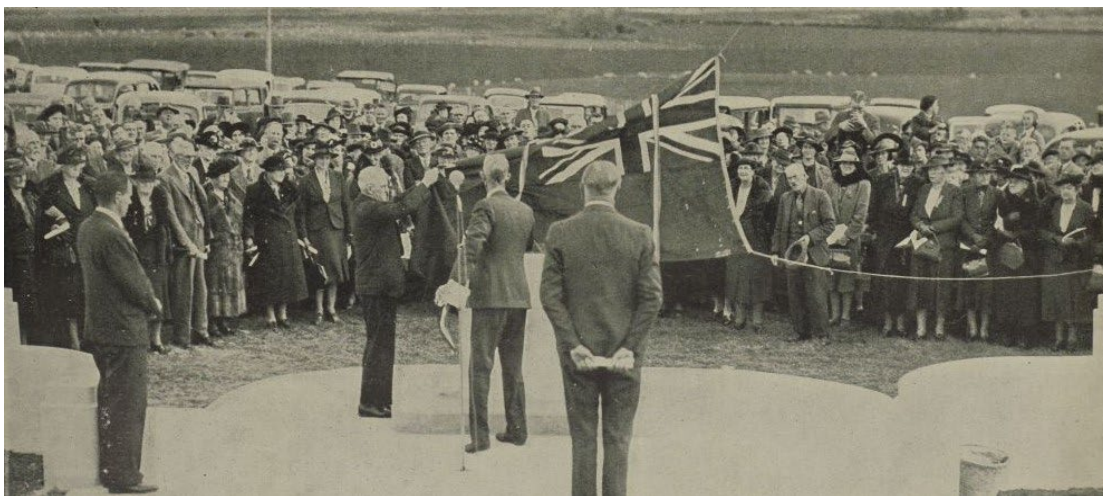


Figure 2 Unveiling the Sandon Old Boys' Association's memorial on Saturday, 20th April 1940. (Source: *Auckland Weekly News*, 24 April 1940, p. 46¹)

The Unveiling Ceremony

By April 1940, plans were nearing completion. Feilding's mayor and town clerk visited Mr Charles Mountfort to especially invite him to the unveiling. They also wanted him to cut the official ribbon. Mountfort was been associated with some of the earliest surveys in the area. He had also been associated with the erection of the trig station at Mt. Stewart – a position that in 1940 was marked by a concrete block.³¹ Charles Adnam Mountfort would have been aged about 85 at the time. Mountfort, however, was unable to be present and sent his apologies.³² He died on 11 May 1941 aged 87.³³

The memorial was duly unveiled on Saturday, 20th April 1940. A very detailed article on the event, the memorial and its complicated history, was published in the *Manawatu Standard* of 22 April 1940. This referred to the choice of site (it could be seen from six counties; and it was the spot from which in 1871 Col. Feilding first viewed the future Feilding district); the origin of the name (the Maori called it Piki Kotuku, the Pakeha named it after surveyor John Tiffen Stewart – though apparently Stewart

²⁹ *Manawatu Standard*, 16 February 1940, p. 5(5)

³⁰ *Manawatu Standard*, 16 February 1940, p. 5(5)

³¹ *Manawatu Standard*, 18 April 1940, p. 5(5)

³² *Manawatu Standard*, 23 April 1940 p. 5(2)

³³ Manawatu District Council: Online cemetery records:

http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Online_Services/Find_It/Cemetery_Search ; also *Auckland Star*, 14 May 1941, p. 3

actually named it after himself³⁴); and all the many people involved in the memorial's funding and construction. The article named the many early settlers, and also named the five of them who had survived to attend the event: Mr J.H. Prisk, Mrs T. Verry, Mrs J. Prisk, Mrs W. Frecklington and Mrs G. Shonrock. It also stated where the funding had originated: £550 had come from various local bodies in the zone, £100 came from the Sandon Old Boys' Association, £250 from private donations – particularly in the Rangitikei County and the Palmerston North and Kairanga Districts, and £250 from the government subsidy. It also referred to the memorial's architect and designer, Mr H.V. Bond (Manawatu County Council's engineer), and the building contractor, the well-known Feilding builder, Mr Wilkinson – himself being one of the early settlers - who had refused to make any profit out of the building.³⁵

Of those present to witness the unveiling, some fifty-five were themselves early settlers who had been resident in New Zealand for at least 75 years. These people wore the Early Settlers' Centennial Ribbon for the occasion.³⁶

The *Evening Post* of 22 April 1940, provided a briefer, and thereby more 'user-friendly' account of the event (for the purposes of this report):

A FITTING TRIBUTE: MANAWATU PIONEERS MEMORIAL TOWER HILLTOP CEREMONY (Special to the "Evening Post.")

PALMERSTON N., This Day.

Nine miles from Palmerston North - on the highway to Wanganui - there is a natural eminence, the top of which gives a commanding view of the vast Manawatu plains and the equally fertile country of the Rangitikei stretching northwards. The hilltop is known as Mount Stewart, and the site was chosen as a suitable one for the descendants of early settlers who laid the foundations of the now prosperous farming community to record their tribute in the form of a memorial, which was unveiled on Saturday. The structure is simple in design, taking the form of a look-out tower.

The unveiling was performed by the Hon. J. G. Cobbe, M.P. for Manawatu.

The proceedings were presided over by the Mayor of Feilding, Mr. T. L. Seddon, in his capacity as chairman of Zone E Centennial Committee. All speakers paid tribute to the work of the pioneers, which, they said, remained an imperishable monument to their names.

The first to suggest a memorial on the Mount Stewart site was Mr. W. J. Croucher, of Palmerston North, who spent his youth a few miles away. Mr. Croucher has also been the driving force behind the movement to raise funds for the memorial, and tributes were paid to his enthusiasm and energy. The memorial was designed by Mr. H.V. Bond, engineer to the Manawatu County Council.

As chairman of the Memorial Executive, Mr. J. Linklater thanked all who had helped to make the memorial an accomplished fact.

'As we unveil this memorial may we each determine to do our duty so that when we pass away, we may, like the pioneers, leave such footprints in the sands of time that those who follow us shall gladly tread the path we trod,' said Mr. Cobbe when unveiling the memorial.

The contribution of the Sandon Old Boys' Association to the memorial takes the form of a direction indicator and sun dial located adjacent to the memorial proper. These were dedicated by Mr. W. J. Croucher, after which the New Zealand Ensign, which forms the Roll of Honour of the Sandon Old Boys' Association, having en-scrolled thereon the names of pupils of the old school who answered the call in 1914-18, was hoisted to the peak of a flagstaff near the memorial; while old pupils present joined hands and stood in silent contemplation of the act. It formed a fitting finale to the afternoon's proceedings.³⁷

³⁴ *Feilding Herald*, 18 October 1990: in the Manawatu District Council file: 'Mt. Stewart War Memorial – General' in 'Parks & Reserves: Mt. Stewart War Memorial, No. 4/3514'

³⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 22 April 1940, p. 8(4-7)

³⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 23 April 1940, p. 5(2)

³⁷ *Evening Post*, 22 April 1940, p. 5



Figure 3 The memorial photographed on 2 July 1940 for the *Free Lance* newspaper. (Source: ID: PAColl-8163-34 Alexander Turnbull Library: <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22349620>)

The Years Since 1940

The Second World War soon had a direct influence on the memorial, when, in February 1941, and accordance with a Governmental order that all lights that may be visible from the sea were to be blackened out, the memorial's floodlighting also had to be turned off. This was because its floodlighting was able to be seen from several miles out to sea.³⁸

The memorial became the landmark that its creators intended, however, not everyone valued it or what it represented. Some newspaper articles chart its story. For example, the *Manawatu Standard*, of 13 April 1983 reported that "*Mt. Stewart's 'lonely edifice' (was) to be improved.*" The "*poor, lonely edifice*" was possibly to be enhanced by a planting programme. An elderly woman, Mrs Irene Evans, had written to Manawatu County Council offering money to go toward the planting and upkeep of a number of trees at the monument. She suggested how they might be planted and what type of trees, based on having lived in the area for many years and knowing what types would grow in that soil. She also suggested that the reserve be named 'Kaweka', which, she said, was the old Maori name for the area. The article noted that the memorial had been a target for vandals, with graffiti artists taking a special interest in it. For example, the council had recently "*spent \$500 cleaning the white stone after Waitangi Day protesters left their mark and two weeks ago the monument was the target for more writing.*" The council was to budget \$2,000 for the job, including covering the monument with anti-graffiti seal to protect it from future graffiti. It was also hoped that planting the area might stop traffic from skidding all over the grass in winter.³⁹

³⁸ *The Feilding Express*, 'Mt. Stewart Memorial Blacked Out' 28 February 1941, in *The Feilding Express Scrapbook*, between 1 August 1940 and 30 April 1942: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/18524#idx21448>

³⁹ *Manawatu Standard*, 13 April 1983, p. 5

In 1990, the memorial was re-dedicated. At midnight on New Year's Eve 1989, two new lights were turned on – as fireworks were set off and the Feilding Pipe Band played. This was the first step in a redevelopment that would include seeing the memorial tidied up, a sundial possibly installed and a park established.⁴⁰

The re-dedication ceremony was conducted on Sunday, 21 October 1990, with the Governor-General Sir Paul Reeves and Lady Reeves also in attendance. Sir Paul Reeves and the Manawatu District Council's mayor, Caryll Clausen unveiled a plaque⁴¹ in the course of officially opening the new park, while a RNZAF Skyhawk also gave an aerobatic display. A grove of trees was also planted as part of the celebrations and a time capsule was to be placed there shortly after the event.⁴²

The hand-out distributed at the rededication ceremony includes errors that indicate how some of the memorial's story had become distorted over the decades. For example, they did not know why the proposed 45-foot-tall tower had shrunk. Also, while aware that there was a second memorial on the site, they did not understand its extent or its purpose. They claimed that the direction finder, *"the walls and the remains of a sundial"*, had been *"a memorial to the Sandon Old Boys who fell during the great war of 1914-1918."*⁴³

In December 2003, the memorial was discovered to have been covered in swastikas and related graffiti. However, the memorial had previously been treated with the necessary chemicals that allowed the assorted marking to be easily removed with a steam cleaner.⁴⁴ Then in December 2005, it was defaced with pro-Maori sovereignty graffiti that referenced New Zealand's Declaration of Independence from 1835. Again it was removed by steam cleaning.⁴⁵

In January 2013, a report was completed on the condition of the building, and this found that various parts needed repairing, including chipped plaster and cracks. Parts of the concrete abutments had broken away and needed repairing. Parts of the handrails had rusted and needed to be sanded and repainted with galvanised paint. There was graffiti in various places on the building, and all the steps required repairing. It also needed new posts and the trees needed attention. The report concluded with: *"In summing up, the memorial has been neglected over the years and requires an entire facelift."*⁴⁶ The memorial subsequently underwent a total re-plaster by Central Plastering Ltd. in August 2013.⁴⁷

The Mount Stewart Centennial Memorial Reserve is described on the Manawatu District Council website as follows:

"The memorial was built in 1940 for the early European settlers and rededicated in the 1990 bicentennial by the Governor General. It is listed in the District as having heritage value with a C category. A time capsule was buried and a plinth with a 360° directional sign was erected for the 1990 Sesqui celebrations. An interpretation room is within the memorial but vandalism has forced it to be

⁴⁰ *Manawatu Standard*, 2 January 1990

⁴¹ This plaque reads (both in English and Maori): *"This plaque was unveiled by His Excellency the Governor General, the Most Reverend Sir Paul Reeves, G.C.M.G, G.C.V.C., on the 21st October 1990 to mark the 60th Anniversary of this memorial and the Sesquicentennial of New Zealand. 'Their Monuments are around you.'"*

⁴² *Feilding Herald*, 18 October 1990; *Manawatu Standard*, 18 October 1990, 23 October 1990

⁴³ 1990 Rededication hand-out, in Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc: 'Mount Stewart Memorial,' File No: 100017 (held at Te Manawa, Palmerston North)

⁴⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 10 December 2003, p. 8

⁴⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 1 November 2005, p. 1

⁴⁶ Report of Gary Bennett, dated 27 January 2013, in Manawatu District Council file: 'Mt. Stewart War Memorial – General' in 'Parks & Reserves: Mt. Stewart War Memorial, No. 4/3514'

⁴⁷ Resene Construction Systems: 'Mount Stewart Centennial Memorial make-over', September 25, 2013: <http://blog.rockcote.co.nz/?p=301>

closed. The top of the memorial provides a good lookout and the reserve is part of the Ngaio Heritage Trail.

“The Trig Society Geodetic Survey mark was named after John Tiffin Stewart (1827 - 1913) who was a pioneer surveyor and engineer. There is a plaque dedicated to him on the rock by the Trig Station.”⁴⁸



Figure 4 The Early Settler Memorial photographed on 28 May 1965 by Maurice Thompson (Source: Photograph Collection: ID: 2015S_2015-55_013603, Palmerston North Library¹)

Herbert Victor Bond – Architect & Designer

The designer of the centennial memorial complex was Herbert Victor Bond. He was born in about 1894, and probably in England, as his next of kin during WWI was listed as his father, who lived in Bermondsey, London. In January 1916, when he was called up for the Gisborne draft of the 12th Reinforcements of the NZEF, he was single and living at Tamarau, where he was working as an engineer. Possibly he worked for the Tamarau Road Board.⁴⁹ By that time, he had already spent one year in the Territorials.⁵⁰

Bond sailed from Wellington with the 12th Reinforcements, Wellington Infantry Battalion, B Company, in mid-1916, bound for Suez, Egypt.⁵¹ On 29 November 1916, the *NZ Times* (p. 9) published “one of the longest hospital and progress reports so far received,” that had been issued the previous evening. Bond was included amongst these as having been reported wounded, but doing well. In April 1917, he was listed as in hospital, but not as a severe case. Then in September 1917, he was delivered back to NZ as an invalid.⁵² The *Poverty Bay Herald* of 27 September 1917 (p. 3) announced that he and other

⁴⁸ ‘Mt. Stewart Centennial Memorial Reserve’, Manawatu District Council:

http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Living_Leisure/Parks_and_Reserves/Landmarks_and_Memorials/Mt_Stewart_Centennial_Memorial_Reserve

⁴⁹ *Hastings Standard*, 11 January 1918, p. 2. (Note that this article is on the Board’s subsequent amalgamation)

⁵⁰ *Poverty Bay Herald*, 7 January 1916, p. 4

⁵¹ Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C67552>

⁵² *NZ Times* 29 November 1916, p. 9, 26 September 1917, p. 6

returnees had reached Gisborne, and of Private H.V. Bond, it stated that after reaching Egypt with the 12th Reinforcements, he had been sent on to France, *“joining the main New Zealand Forces during the Somme engagement. Whilst the offensive was in progress, Private Bond was buried by a shell explosion, sustaining internal injuries.”*

Bond married Nina Olea Bertha Hansen in 1919, and in January 1921, the couple moved from Napier to Auckland.⁵³ There he became assistant engineer to the Onehunga Borough Council. In July 1924, he was appointed clerk of works and acting-engineer to the Mt. Roskill Road Board.⁵⁴

Bond appears to have started working for the Manawatu County Council in about 1927, and some of the work he was involved with over the following 32 years included being a participant at a special meeting of the Moutoa Drainage Board in 1931 to finalise the location for the erection of proposed land-level floodgates at Whirokino that had *“been specially designed with the idea of providing for a quick release of the pent-up waters in flood time.”* Although not researched further, this appears to relate to the Whirokino Cut that followed a decade later.⁵⁵

He was instrumental in 1933 in getting Manawatu County Council to protest to the Minister of Public Works about the type of cottages being built around the country, and especially those in Manawatu County, under the Government’s unemployment farm scheme, where one of the two types of cottages was being built with only a back door. He considered these unsafe in the event of fire, while the materials were far below the standards required by the county’s bylaws.⁵⁶ In 1939, he also highlighted the problem of the rapid building development taking place at the seaside resort at Manawatu Heads (Foxton Beach), which was leading to slum conditions. This included sheds being permitted (or built without permits), which were then being converted into residences, and also no-one being present at the properties on weekdays when the inspector arrived to check the buildings.⁵⁷

Bond retired in 1959, after 32 years as Manawatu County’s Engineer.⁵⁸ He died on 30 November 1963, aged 69, and is buried at the Purewa Cemetery, Meadowbank, Auckland.⁵⁹

William Wilkinson – Building Contractor

William Wilkinson was a well-known builder and contractor in Feilding. He was born in Preston, Lancashire, in 1859, and arrived in Feilding in 1879, where he began working with his uncle, Mr F. Pope. After learning the building trade, he started business in his own right in 1891, and this went on to be one of the leading building firms in the district. By the early 1900s, it employed thirty people. Wilkinson’s firm erected a large number of buildings in the Feilding district, including Sandilands' Buildings, the Land and Loan Company's offices, the Denbigh Hotel, the Union Chambers, Carthew’s Buildings, the Bank of New Zealand, and the Technical School. Some of these are still standing. William Wilkinson died 21 February 1941, aged 81, and is buried at Feilding Cemetery.⁶⁰

⁵³ Marriage ID 1919/9852: Births, Deaths & Marriages: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>; *Auckland Star*, 21 January 1921, p. 8

⁵⁴ *NZ Herald*, 16 July 1924, p. 11, 22 July 1924, p. 11,

⁵⁵ *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 31 January 1931, p. 5, 9 October 1931, p. 8

⁵⁶ *Evening Post*, 14 September 1933, p. 13

⁵⁷ *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 14 June 1939, p. 7

⁵⁸ *Feilding Herald*, 1 October 1959, p. 2: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/18680#idx22964>

⁵⁹ ‘Herbert Victor Bond’, on BillionGraves.com: <https://billiongraves.com/grave/Herbert-Victor-Bond/18877317#/>

⁶⁰ *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Taranaki, Hawkes Bay & Wellington Provinces]*, (Christchurch, 1908): <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc06Cycl-t1-body1-d3-d20-d10.html>; *The Feilding Express*, ‘Obituary’ 21 February 1941, in *The Feilding Express Scrapbook*, between 1 August 1940 and 30 April 1942: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/18524#idx21448>



Figure 5 The area associated with the Sandon Old Boys' Association's memorial to the early settlers of the Sandon district, photographed from the viewing platform of the main monument. The names from the direction finder are now on the step that surrounds the pedestal at the centre of this photo. The pedestal may be the original one, judging by its shape - 23 October 2016

Sandon Old Boys' Association – Prime Movers

The organisation that played a key role in the establishment of the early settlers' memorial was the Sandon Old Boys' Association, which had been formed in about 1904. These were former pupils of Sandon School, which had opened in Sanson in 1874. Sandon was the name of the district and Sanson is the name of the town.⁶¹ The association was very active, and when it held its fifteenth annual meeting in May 1919, it was recorded that "73 old boys and one girl pupil" from the school had departed overseas during the war. Two had gained Military Medals and 21 old boys had died. Three members, including Mr W.J. (William John) Croucher who later began the process that led to the construction of the Mt. Stewart Memorial, were then appointed to make enquiries toward selecting a memorial tablet upon which to list all the former Sandon School old pupils who had been on active service.⁶² This was duly unveiled at Sandon School by Mr W.J. Croucher (then the association's secretary) on 19 March 1921.⁶³

In November 1933, Sandon School celebrated its Diamond Jubilee and also the arrival of the first European settlers in the area. This included an early settlers' dinner held on 24th November where over 300 people attended the dinner, followed by a ball in the evening. The next two days saw a procession, sports events and a commemoration service.⁶⁴ The timing of this event and the timing of the association approaching the Manawatu Country Council apparently soon after to try to have an early settlers' memorial installed on Mt. Stewart, seem to be closely aligned.

In due course, after being active participants in the process that led to the memorial being built, the Sandon Old Boys' Association also unveiled their own memorial to the local early settlers, minutes after the completion of the unveiling of the main memorial. Their memorial consisted of a direction finder and a sun dial set on a pedestal in front of the main memorial. This memorial was dedicated by Mr W.J. Croucher, "after which the New Zealand Ensign, which forms the Roll of Honour of the Sandon Old Boys' Association, having enscrolled thereon the names of pupils of the old school who answered the call in 1914-18, was hoisted to the peak of a flagstaff near the memorial; while old pupils present

⁶¹ Holcroft, p. 8; *The Cyclopaedia of NZ, Vol. 1* (Wellington, 1897): <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc01Cycl-t1-body-d4-d150.html>

⁶² *Feilding Star*, 7 May 1919, p. 2

⁶³ *Manawatu Standard*, 21 March 1921, p. 5; When Sandon School was replaced in 1991 by another on a new site (the present Sanson School), the old memorial was relocated to the new school, where it was set on a cenotaph in the school grounds. It was rededicated on 11 November 1993: Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 1994), p. 59. The memorial lists eighty names, of which nineteen had died.

⁶⁴ *Evening Post*, 25 November 1933, p. 11

joined hands and stood in silent contemplation of the act. It formed a fitting finale to the afternoon's proceedings."⁶⁵

William John Croucher died on 12 August 1947 aged 76 years, and is buried at Sandon cemetery.⁶⁶



Figure 6 The historic trig station with the Early Settlers' Memorial in the background (Source: Google Street View, May 2015¹)

Comments

There was to have been a plaque installed on the new memorial giving the names of the structure's designer, Mr R.V. Bond, and its builder, Mr W. Wilkinson. However, if it was ever installed, it appears to have now disappeared. Damaged plaster inside the building at the foot of the stairs leading to the lookout, suggests that something has been removed from that location.

The wishes of the Sandon Old Boys' Association were to be acknowledged by a direction-indicator that was to also be designed by Mr H.V. Bond. This was intended to harmonise with the rest of the memorial, and it was to be placed on a central pedestal, where it would show the geographic features visible from the hilltop. This is no longer present as described, but possibly these are the brass indicators now imbedded in the concrete on the ground around the pedestal. Whether they were removed from the pedestal (or perhaps a previous pedestal) prior to the installation of the new plaque on that location in 1990, was not researched. The new plaque does not mention the Sandon Old Boys' Association, or its memorial. Thus there is no surviving "*permanent identification*" of the association at the site, or of its local memorial – although the present pedestal looks much like the original one.

The Sandon Old Boys' Association also wanted to display a survey plan showing the original sections occupied in the vicinity by the Hutt Small Farm Association that established the adjoining land. They hoped to display this on an inner wall of the structure. However, that is not apparently present now either. This presumably refers to the interpretation room within the building that was forced to be closed due to vandalism.

⁶⁵ *Evening Post*, 22 April 1940, p. 5

⁶⁶ Manawatu District Council: http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Online_Services/Find_It/Cemetery_Search



Figure 7 Some of the names from the direction finder originally on the Sandon Old Boys' Association's memorial to the early settlers of the Sandon district. 23 October 2016

Originally the monument had an accessway that came up from SH3, passed in front of the memorial, and then back down onto SH3. However, one of these accessways has since been closed, and the other is now accessed from the Mount Stewart-Halcombe Road.

This study has mostly used online sources, along with information and newspaper clippings from files held by Manawatu District Council and Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc. Additional information will be available using archival sources relating to the various other bodies that were involved (or otherwise) with its construction.

It has been noticeable during this study that a number of errors have slipped into the story of this memorial over the years, and an important aspect of its history – that relating to the Sandon Old Boys' Association's memorial to Sandon's early settlers – has effectively been adapted out of existence. Some of this can be partially remedied by the use of an interpretation panel that should include clear reference to the fact that the remnants of the direction finder now effectively at ground level, belonged to the special memorial to Sandon's own early settlers, and not to the main memorial.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial is located on a triangular area of land between State Highway 3 and Mount Stewart Halcombe Road, off which is the access and parking areas. It comprises two main elements either side of the access road. The larger element of the two is a symmetrically designed lookout that faces south east. It has a central entry and steps to a landing off which are steps either side to a viewing platform. The structure has curved walls and stepped balustrading, consistent with the Moderne style. At the base of the structure are planter boxes either side of the entry with similarly detailed low wall.

On the wall above the entry steps is an inscription with the inscription:

“Centennial Memorial
1840 1940
To the Glory of God
And in
Commemoration of Our Early Settlers”

Opposite and in a line with the centre of the lookout is a pedestal with a bronze plaque marking the 50th anniversary of the construction of the monument. It was unveiled by Governor General Sir Paul reeves on 21 October 1990. The pedestal is detailed to match the main memorial and is set on top of a concrete plinth and steps. The lowest step has a bronze plaque stating:

Time Capsule
1990
Organised by
Piki Kotuku Mount Stewart
1990 Committee

Either side are symmetrical low walls and columns with balls on top.

The access drive and parking areas are marked with concrete posts.

The term 'moderne' was originally used to describe the more ornate buildings of the twenties and thirties which were not of the unadorned International style. It is now used to distinguish the cubic decorated Art Deco from the curved streamlined style of the later 1930's and early 1940's, which developed from Art Deco.

Industrial designers lead the way towards the streamlined moderne style and designed products, which heavily influenced the design of buildings. These products were designed to express speed, with the ovoid or tear drop the most popular shape. The design of cars, trains, boats and aeroplanes were also designed in this style and it was particularly the aeroplane aesthetic of projecting wings, curves, and portholes which were adopted by architects for moderne styled buildings.

The style evolved, especially with house design to have characteristics of horizontal forms with rounded corners and curved projecting wings. Parapets hiding flat or shallow roofs were very common. Many houses of the 1940's and even into the 1950's used this style, particularly State and developer housing largely because it was a cheaper style to produce with little, if any decoration.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2016 for this building is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low to high regional** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** values as a good example of the Moderne style of architecture adapted for a lookout. It has **low technological** value as the materials used for the memorial are common for the period.

The memorial has **moderate rarity, representativeness** and **group** values as one of several Wellington provincial memorials built to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of New Zealand and only one of two constructed in concrete.

The memorial has **high authenticity** with little visible change to the structure since 1990 when the last modification was made.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, commemorative and education** values as a centennial memorial commemorating the establishment of New Zealand.

SOURCES

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Manawatu Standard (as per footnotes)

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Online Sources

Alexander Turnbull Library: <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22349620>

Auckland Council Libraries: <http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/dbtw-wpd/HeritageImages/index.htm> : *Auckland Weekly News* (Search words: 'Mount Stewart Memorial')

Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C67552>

BillionGraves.com: <https://billiongraves.com/grave/Herbert-Victor-Bond/18877317#/>

Births, Deaths & Marriages: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> (As per footnotes)

Feilding District Libraries: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/> (As per footnotes)

Feilding Herald, 1 October 1959, p. 2:

<http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/18680#idx22964>

Feilding Star Scrapbook, between 1st March 1938 and 31 March 1939:

<http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/18534#idx22153>

Google Street View: <https://www.google.co.nz/maps/>

Heritage NZ: 'Petone Settlers Museum': <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/206>

Manawatu Heritage: <https://manawatuheritage.pncc.govt.nz/item/ea8c5d1f-58a6-4987-b9b6-a22e530cc36a>

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Auckland Star, Evening Post, Feilding Star, Hastings Standard, Horowhenua Chronicle, Manawatu Standard, NZ Herald, NZ Times, Poverty Bay Herald, Press*) - (as per footnotes and text)

Resene Construction Systems: 'Mount Stewart Centennial Memorial make-over', September 25, 2013: <http://blog.rockcote.co.nz/?p=301>

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The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Taranaki, Hawkes Bay & Wellington Provinces], (Christchurch, 1908): <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc06Cycl-t1-body1-d3-d20-d10.html>

The Feilding Express Scrapbook, between 1 August 1940 and 30 April 1942:

<http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/18524#idx21448>

Other Sources:

Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc: 'Mount Stewart Memorial,' File No: 100017 (held at Te Manawa, Palmerston North) Note that this file contains a wide variety of material.

Manawatu District Council: Online cemetery records; Online maps; File: 'Mt. Stewart War Memorial – General' in 'Parks & Reserves: Mt. Stewart War Memorial, No. 4/3514' (As per footnotes)

Note that the records at Archives Central, Feilding, were not accessed during this study. However, there are at least five files on the topic out there:
<http://archivescentral.org.nz/en/site> (Search word: "Mt Stewart Memorial")

MAKINO FOOTBRIDGE – Hobson Street, Feilding



Designer: NZ Railway engineers

Construction date: 1900

Visible materials: Wrought iron structure, timber decking

Architectural style: Bow-string arch truss bridge

Use/building type: Bridge

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2016

Heritage New Zealand listing:

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The granite *plaque* that marks this bridge states that: *“This bridge was erected in 1900 by New Zealand Railways at a cost of £353 as an over rail bridge for Feilding pedestrians and was used as such until 27th February 1978. To preserve its historical value it was moved to this site by the Feilding Lions Club and is regarded as a historic place.”* Although its address is given as 135 Manchester Street, the bridge in fact leads across the Makino Stream from the Hobson Street - Stafford Street intersection. It now provides access from Hobson Street to the Makino Aquatic Centre and the Manawatu District Council offices.

Background

The agitation that led to the construction of this bridge began in 1897, when a proposal was put forward to extend the station’s goods yard. An effect of this extension was that the railway crossing that linked the two parts of Eyre Street would be closed. The *Feilding Star* of 3 December 1897, in reporting on a meeting of the Feilding Borough Council, duly reported on a letter received *“From Railway Engineer, Wanganui, stating it was necessary, in order to provide for future extension of sidings at the Feilding railway station, that the present crossing through the yard in line with Eyre street should be closed. With a view to this a road had been metalled from Eyre to Gladstone streets and the Department were prepared to hand it over to the borough, and asking for the Council’s decision in the*

matter.”¹ This new ‘road’ is likely to be the accessway that still runs between these two streets, alongside the Feilding & Districts’ Steam Rail Society’s facilities.

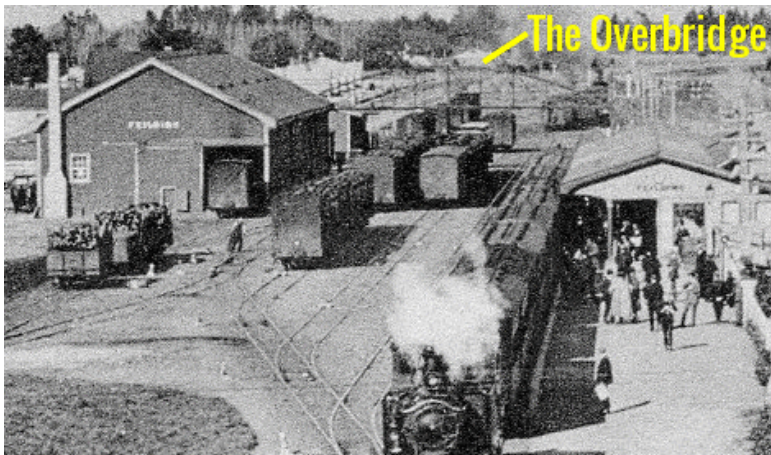


Figure 1 The overbridge in the background of a scene at the Feilding Railway Station. Cropped from an early postcard from c1900-1910. (Source: Val Burr, postcard collection)

The Feilding Borough Council meeting of 6 January 1898 reported on a letter it had received from the District Railway Engineer, of Wanganui, regarding the Eyre Street crossing. Accordingly, the *Feilding Star* recorded that: *The Mayor reported having seen the traffic manager with reference to the crossing at Eyre street and the latter gave him to understand that the Department would either provide a subway or an over-head crossing if the Council took over the road. He thought (with the traffic manager) that a subway would be preferable. It was then “Resolved ... That the Mayor be authorised to make the necessary arrangements with the Railway Department for providing a subway or overhead bridge at Eyre street and taking over the road to the gas works.”*²

In October 1899, the Feilding Borough Council received a letter from the General Manager of NZ Railways with regards to the inadequate accommodation at the railway station for goods and livestock. The letter advised that Parliament would shortly make the money available to undertake this work.³

At a Feilding Borough Council meeting in January 1900: *“The Mayor reported that the Railway Engineer had waited on him with respect to the railway crossing at Eyre street which the railway department intended closing for vehicular traffic. The department had arranged to put a foot bridge over it in place of the level crossing.”*⁴

The Bridge

The decision to precede with the overbridge having finally been made, six months later the *Feilding Star* published an article on the extensive work that had been going on at the railway station:

“For some months the employees of the Railway Department have been busily engaged in effecting alterations and improvements to the Feilding Railway Station, which are now rapidly approaching completion. The goods shed has been removed to a new site and enlarged sufficiently to meet the requirements of the district of which Feilding is the centre, for the next few years.

¹ *Feilding Star*, 3 December 1897, p. 2

² *Feilding Star*, 7 January 1898, p. 2

³ *Feilding Star*, 6 October 1899, p. 2

⁴ *Feilding Star*, 19 January 1900, p. 2

The whole of the station yard has been renovated and greater facilities afforded for shunting and loading horses, cattle and sheep, also, wool, butter, cheese and all other produce. Gates have been placed at the Kimbolton road end, while a handsome foot bridge has been erected so as to connect those portions of Eyre street bisected by the main line. The verandah newly erected on the station platform is a great convenience to the public as a shelter whether from the sun or the rain.

“We expect that the rules will now be strictly enforced as to trespassing on the railway premises (except of course where the public are allowed at ordinary hours) also when the station gates are closed in the afternoon at five o'clock no access whatever will be allowed to the goods shed, so dilatory people will have to cultivate the virtue of punctuality. The railway hands have to work very long hours as it is, and there is no need to have them lengthened without good and valid reason.

In order to avoid any necessity for consignees crossing the line from the goods shed to the Station master's office or vice versa a goods clerk should be appointed at once. This would also be a convenience to the public, and at the same time do away with the necessity which now obtains of the clerks having to work on Sundays to make up their returns.”⁵

Ken Cassells, in *The Foxton and Wanganui Railway*, described the new footbridge, which was built from old rails, as being 77 feet in length, and as having been built to span the five sets of tracks then in use.⁶

Throughout its lifetime on its original site, this bridge doubtless was a place to play and a place to admire the activity taking place beneath it. Certainly it was a popular place to take photos of the station and its surrounds. However, it also presented dangers in its own right, and the following letter appeared in the *Feilding Star* within weeks of the bridge becoming available for the public to use: *“Sir, — I should like to draw the attention of the railway authorities, through the columns of your paper, to the necessity of lighting the overhead bridge they have recently erected in Eyre street. As a resident I have occasion to cross this bridge to get home and this last few nights I have had to feel my way over with my feet, for it is quite impossible to see the steps from the top. Already one child has tumbled down the steps, and I am sure if there are not some lights fixed on the structure there will be a serious accident. Thanking you in anticipation. I am, etc., Dangerous.”⁷*

The *Feilding Star* of 27 March 1915 (p. 2) appears to refer to refer to the bridge, albeit with an apparent typo in the original article. The author was complaining about the constant delays to traffic moving along Kimbolton Road due to trains standing still with their wagons across the tracks, while the engines were being watered. The writer went on to state that: *“The overhead bridge which spans the yard in Glasgow street could be done away with by constructing a subway. If the latter was made wide enough to take vehicles it would be a great convenience, as much traffic flows from the town out to Denbigh street and South street...”*. Glasgow Street⁸ was subsequently renamed Ongley Street⁸, and it appears to have no relationship to the railway station's yard. It seems more likely that the writer was referring to Eyre Street – and thus the bridge being researched here.

In 1919, a sub-committee of Feilding's Chamber of Commerce, undertook an investigation of the various improvements it deemed necessary at the station. Amongst the various criticisms included the need for a larger goods yard that was organised in a different way. The report also noted that in 1913, 173,000 sheep passed outward-bound through the station, with 187,000 sheep doing likewise in 1918. There were 32,000 inward-bound sheep in 1913, with 158,000 sheep arriving in 1918. The report

⁵ *Feilding Star*, 7 June 1900, p. 2. Note that the *Feilding Star* of 7 February 1896 (p. 2) also refers to the Feilding goods shed being about to be enlarged by 20 feet, and whether or not this is the same enlargement, was not researched.

⁶ K.R. Cassells, *The Foxton and Wanganui Railway* (Wellington, 1984), p. 150

⁷ *Feilding Star*, 29 June 1900, p. 2

⁸ Dorothy Pilkington, *Signs of the Times: The story of Feilding street names* (Feilding, 2015), p. 63

stated that in terms of stock traffic, Feilding's stock movements by rail were the largest of any country station in the North Island.⁹ While this article does not refer to the overbridge, it provides an idea of just how much activity took place around the station at that time – the Feilding Stock Sales being a major attractant to these stock movements.

By the 1970s, the need for such a large goods yard had significantly diminished. For example, trucks now carried livestock to and from the Feilding Stock Sales, instead of the trains, and thus much of the goods yard was now redundant. One of the things also deemed surplus to requirements was the overbridge, and its demolition was anticipated.¹⁰ However, as in other towns, other people viewed the bridge as still being useful, albeit elsewhere.

Relocation

The *Manawatu Standard* of 28 February 1978, covered the relocation of the bridge. It described the bridge as a local landmark that had been uprooted the previous day and then moved by truck transporter to where “it now straddles the Makino stream, giving access to a children’s playground.” The article also stated that “The number of railway tracks crossing Kimbolton Road will be reduced from six to two – something Feilding people have been wanting for decades.”



Figure 2 The overbridge in its original site above the railway tracks. (Source: Feilding Library photo MAND: 28: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/17814>)



Figure 3 Installing the overbridge into its new location over the Makino Stream on 27 February 1978. (Source: Feilding Library photo: UTS:rr5: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/16983>)

The article stated that both the removal of the bridge and the reduction in the number of tracks, was the result of the relocation of the railway yards. The project had begun in 1977 and was due to be complete about two weeks after the bridge was removed. Following this work, all the railway yards would be near the railway station, instead of on both sides of Kimbolton Road. “Feilding’s stationmaster Mr E.C. Child, said the footbridge, which carried pedestrians across the six railway tracks had (therefore) been made redundant.”

The article described how the decision had been made to remove the overbridge about three years earlier, and the Feilding Lions Club had then applied for, and been given permission to put the bridge over the Makino Stream. When the time arrived, a steam crane and a work gang had been sent from

⁹ *Feilding Star*, 9 June 1919, p. 2

¹⁰ Interview with Albert James, Feilding, 20 February 2017

Wanganui to remove the bridge: *“The operation was postponed until mid-day, when no trains were running. After being lifted from its foundations, the 24-metre bridge was swung onto a road transporter. This consisted of the front of an articulated truck and a mini-truck. With each vehicle supporting one end of the bridge, the cavalcade cautiously crossed the six railway tracks of Kimbolton Road and moved down Aorangi Street to its new location. A road crane (then) completed the operation.”*

The various local contractors involved had supplied the vehicles used to transport the bridge, and also the road crane, free of charge. Evidently the work involved was *“quite a feat.”*¹¹ Mr Child (stationmaster) said that the bridge would have been moved some time earlier, if the construction of the new railway yards had not been delayed. The new yards would have begun operating a week or so earlier, if the station had not then been very busy with grain cartage. Once the grain season ended in another two weeks, the *“old high-level loading bank will be removed and the new yards put into operation. After that, four of the tracks crossing Kimbolton road will be removed.”*¹²

Recent History

The footbridge was proposed for a Category One heritage status with the Feilding Borough Council in 1980, due to its historical status.¹³ However, it is not registered with either the Rail Heritage Trust of NZ, or Heritage NZ.¹⁴

During the disastrous floods of 16 February 2004, the Makino Stream flooded badly, inundating the area around it.¹⁵ However, neither the bridge nor its supports were damaged, although water flowed over its deck and it required water-blasting afterwards. Its paths, however, were significantly eroded.¹⁶

In April 2013, the bridge was closed to the public to allow it to be cleaned, repaired and repainted, to the value of \$42,300. It reopened in May 2013.¹⁷ The bridge that was red in 1978 and green in 2004, had also reverted to its traditional shade of red.

Comments

Heritage New Zealand’s on-line listing for the Ashburton Railway Footbridge¹⁸, included the following information on the Makino footbridge: *“Now known as the Makino Footbridge, this bowstring truss footbridge was originally situated over the railway line in Feilding but some years ago it was shifted and now is over the Makino Stream. The bridge is not currently entered on the New Zealand Heritage List.”*

The report on the Ashburton Railway Footbridge report added that: *“The bow or bowstring truss style footbridge was often used, in New Zealand and elsewhere, to provide pedestrian access across the often expansive sets of rail lines associated with railway stations, albeit with variations in the style of*

¹¹ Interview with Albert James, Feilding, 20 February 2017

¹² *Manawatu Standard*, 28 February 1978, p. 3

¹³ Philip Whyte, ‘Hobson Street – Makino Footbridge’, in *“Proposed Register of objects and places of historic interest of natural beauty”* (Feilding Borough Council, 1980): Ref: MDC A/2012/2 : 1568, Archives Central, Feilding

¹⁴ Rail Heritage Trust of NZ: <http://www.railheritage.org.nz/>; Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/>

¹⁵ ‘Feilding takes brunt of raging torrents, *NZ Herald*, 18 February 2004: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=3549686

¹⁶ Interview with Albert James, Feilding, 20 February 2017

¹⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 19 April 2013, p. 2, 9 May 2013

¹⁸ ‘Railway Footbridge, Ashburton’: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/7665>

bracing and number of trusses. Rather than being a common feature as they once were, they are now relatively rare.”

In addition to the Ashburton Railway Footbridge, Heritage NZ identified another six surviving bowstring truss railway footbridges in their report. These are Oamaru, Dunedin, Woburn No. 1 and No. 2, Feilding, and the Greymouth footbridge that is now at Shanty Town. The report overlooked the former Palmerston North one – or rather a segment of what had been a lengthy overbridge. It was removed from the former central city railway station site in the mid-1960s, and was then installed across the Centennial Lagoon in Hokowhitu, Palmerston North. It also recently underwent a significant overhaul.¹⁹

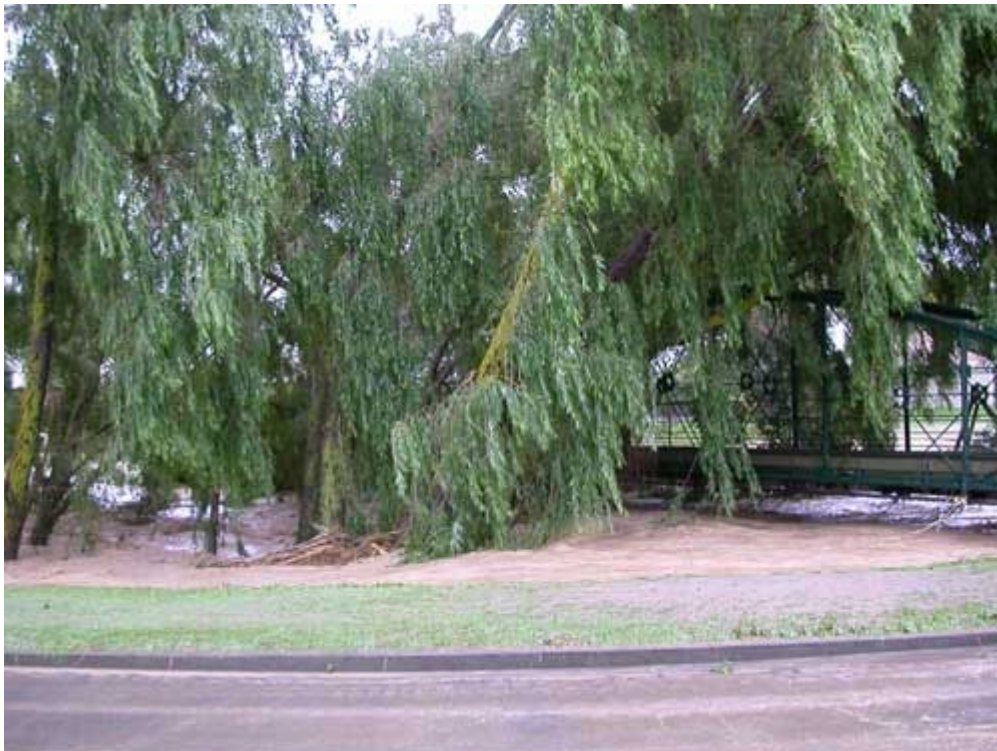


Figure 4 Game Planet thread: ‘OT – Flooding’ featuring a number of posts made by local members of the forum at the time of the major 2004 flood. This photo of the badly flooded Makino Stream alongside the footbridge was posted to the website by a gamer with the ID ‘Assassin’ at 2:27pm on 16 February 2004. It had been taken about 30 minutes previously. ‘Assassin’ states that the water was on the decline by this time, but with lots of mud, sticks and silt left lying around the town. Earlier in the day it had been flowing over the deck of the bridge – with a corresponding effect on the surrounding area. (Source: <http://www.gpforums.co.nz/threads/204220-OT-Flooding>)

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The architect was the New Zealand Railways engineers.

Bow string arch trusses were most commonly used from approximately 1840 to the late 19th century²⁰. They had a tied metal-framed arch with the vertical structural elements supporting the deck. Diagonals served as bracing. Most bridges of this design were between 21-50 metres in length.

¹⁹ *Manawatu Standard*, 14 October 2015: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/73006108/central-span-of-hokowhitu-lagoon-bridge-away-for-repairs>

²⁰ Comp, Allan, T, Jackson, Donald, “Bridge Truss Types a guide to dating and identifying”, American Association for State and Local History Technical Leaflet 95, 1977

The Makino example has railway irons forming the bow, base and rectangular arch frame at each entry. The frame is riveted or bolted together. Horizontal structural elements connecting the bow with the entry frames are decorated with traditional wrought iron scrolls.

The footbridges designed and constructed for the New Zealand Railways Department were often a standard design using mass produced components for economy and ease of construction.

The bridge crosses the Makino stream giving access from Hobson Street to the Makino Aquatic Centre to the north. The stream banks are grassed with large trees on either side.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The bridge has **low to high local** significance for **architectural, representativeness, technology, rarity, authenticity, group, pattern** and **educational** heritage values.

The bridge has **high architectural** and **representativeness** values as a good example of a railway footbridge bridge type once a common feature of large railway stations. The bridge has **moderate technology** values as the bow-string arch bridge type was used throughout the world in the latter half of the 19th century. The New Zealand Railways Department footbridges were innovative as they were often designed using standard components for economy and ease of construction.

The bridge has **high rarity** values as few of this type of bridge remains in New Zealand. Consequently nationally, the bridge has **low group** values because there are few similar such bridges remaining in New Zealand. It has also lost its connection with the Feilding railway station the original station has been replaced.

The bridge has **moderate authenticity** of fabric with most of the structure retained, however it has no authenticity of setting as it has been relocated.

The bridge has **low pattern** and **education** values in its association with the Feilding Railway Station and the general North Island rail network. It has **moderate public esteem values** having been saved and relocated from its original location.

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Thanks also to Albert James for assisting with some of the recent history of the bridge.

BOER WAR MEMORIAL – Manchester Square, Feilding



Architect: F. de J. Clere

Construction date: 1902

Visible materials: Cement render over Sydney sandstone, painted metal scrolls and lighting, drinking fountains

Architectural style: Obelisk

Use/building type: War memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2016

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹

Introduction

Feilding's South African War memorial appears not to have had its own unique unveiling event. Rather its 'official introduction' to the town appears to have become incorporated into the major event held in Feilding on 9 August 1902, celebrating the coronation of King Edward VII. Certainly the returned troopers made up part of the procession through the town, while a number of these men were also awarded the South African War medal during the ceremony. The newly-completed monument will have made a poignant backdrop to the presentations in Manchester Square, although the sadness of

¹ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-3>

the war deaths will have conflicted awkwardly with the decorated bicycles and vehicles that were also present to celebrate the coronation.²



Figure 1 The South African War Memorial (Photo: Feilding Library No. BLG:pb27).

Installing the Memorial

The *Feilding Star* recorded much of the progress toward erecting the war memorial. For example, the edition of 7 May 1902 (p. 2) recorded that: “We have been informed by His Worship the Mayor that the Transvaal war memorial will shortly be erected in the centre of Manchester Square, plans of appropriate and handsome design having been completed for that purpose by Mr F. J. de Clere, F.R.I.B.A., of Wellington. The memorial will consist of a handsome spiral structure artistically finished in Sydney stone, resting on a base of Footscray stone steps, surmounted by two incandescent arc lamps. Drinking fountains are provided for, and the work will be carried out by an expert monumental mason. When finished the memorial will be a very fine architectural improvement to the town, as well as a silent yet eloquent tribute to the memory of those gallant lads whose lives were given for their nation’s cause and honor.”³

The installation of the South African War Memorial in Manchester Square, Feilding, was duly set to coincide with the celebrations surrounding the coronation of King Edward VII in England, and the *Feilding Star’s* editorial of 8 May 1902 (p. 2) acknowledged the two events. It stated that: “As

other centres in the colony are already moving in the matter and making preparations for the proper celebration of the Coronation of the King, we presume that Feilding will not omit to do something in the same direction.” It then went on to explain that in Dunedin the coronation celebrations had included provision for a memorial to the fallen soldiers. Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury were planning similar celebrations. The editorial concluded by hoping: “that among other things the Mayor will consider the advisableness of following the example of Dunedin and laying the foundation stone of the monument to be erected in Manchester Square on the occasion, and thus serve the double purpose of ‘honoring the King,’ and of perpetuating the memory of those gallant fellows who represented this part of the colony during the war in South Africa.”

A detailed description of the memorial was subsequently published in the *NZ Herald* of 16 July 1902: “A handsome stone obelisk is being prepared by Mr. W. J. Helyer⁴, as a memorial to fallen troopers, to be erected in a prominent position at Feilding. The monument, which will be 14ft 6in high, will be surmounted by an ornamental iron branch, bearing four lamps. On the respective sides will be

² *Feilding Star*, 8 August 1902, p. 2, 9 August 1902, p. 2

³ *Feilding Star*, 7 May 1902, p. 2

⁴ Walter James Helyer (c1858-1932) was an Australian-born monumental mason, who had arrived in NZ as a child with his family. His father was a monumental mason in Wellington, and Walter in due course joined his business. He then eventually took it over. (*Evening Post*, 8 April 1932, p. 9) Helyer erected the Ballance Memorial in Parliament grounds in 1897. (*Evening Post*, 22 December 1896, p. 5) He also constructed the Collingwood South African War Memorial – which is a similar, but plainer version of the Feilding memorial. (*Nelson Evening Mail*, 27 September 1901, p. 2)

engraved the following inscriptions :—(1) 'To the memory of those brave men from this district who, obeying the call of duty, sacrificed their lives in the cause of their Empire in the Boer war in South Africa, A.D., 1899-1902;' (2) 'V.R.:' (3) 'E.R.:' (4) 'Duty to God and Empire.' The memorial is to be supplied with four drinking basins and cups, and also a drinking trough for dogs. Mr. F. de J. Clere was designer of the monument."⁵

The *Feilding Star* of 4 August 1902 in due course reported that: "The material for the Transvaal War Memorial, to be erected in Manchester Square, has arrived, and a start was made this morning to lay the foundation."⁶

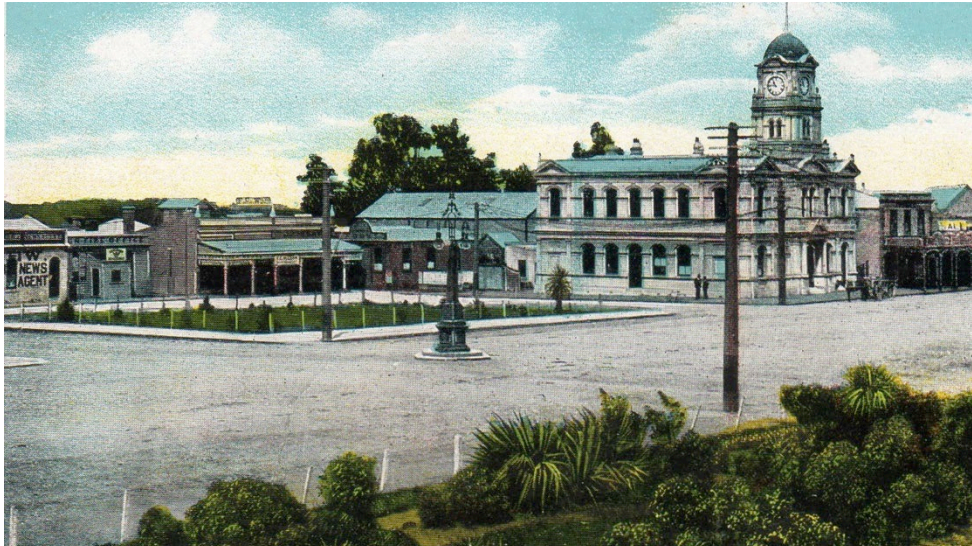


Figure 2 The South African War Memorial in its original location – in the site now occupied by the Feilding Clock Tower (Photo: Val Burr, Private Collection. Also Feilding Library's Photo No: STS:ms46)

At the Feilding Borough Council meeting of 7 August 1902: "The Mayor, Crs. Dickson and Cobbe were appointed a committee to deal with the question of the proposed lamp provided for in connection with the Transvaal War Memorial."⁷ Two days later the Coronation celebration was held.

Complaints, Vandalism, Lights and Various Other Issues

It seems that it was not long before the new memorial was attracting negative attention, as on 23 August 1902 the *Feilding Star* reported that: "Some evil disposed persons have defaced the letters V.R. on the monument in the centre of Manchester Square. We may point out that a silly act of vandalism such as this may bring condign punishment on the heads of the offenders. The police have the matter in hand."⁸ Then, on 19 September 1902. Mr J. J. Bagnall inserted an advertisement in the *Feilding Star* "stating that though a member of the Borough Council he is in no way responsible for the erection of the monument in Manchester Square."⁹

The Feilding Borough Council's meeting of 2 October 1902 learned that the Department of Trade and Customs had written to them: "stating that there was no legal authority to refund the amount of (£7) paid on (the) Transvaal War Memorial, but that an amount will be placed on the supplementary estimates and a refund made when the vote has been passed by the Legislature."¹⁰

⁵ *NZ Herald*, 17 July 1902, p. 5

⁶ *Feilding Star*, 4 August 1902, p. 2

⁷ *Feilding Star*, 8 August 1902, p. 2

⁸ *Feilding Star*, 23 August 1902, p. 2

⁹ *Feilding Star*, 20 September 1902, p. 2 & p. 3

¹⁰ *Feilding Star*, 3 October 1902, p. 2



Figure 3 The South African War Memorial in around 1920, having been relocated off the roadway, to its second site where it stood until about 2006. It had also been stripped of its lights by this time. (Photo: Val Burr, Private Collection)

Things evidently began to look up significantly after the addition of the lamps to the memorial in early October: *“The recent additions to the Transvaal War Memorial in the shape of four arc lamps together with the well-designed ornamental scroll work from which the lamps have been suspended, are a noticeable improvement and materially reduced its sombre appearance. The ironwork, which was carried out by Mr A. Hawker, of Messrs W. E. Chamberlain and Co, is a very creditable piece of workmanship, and the gas and water fittings were supplied by the Gas Company, and executed under the supervision of Mr Stunell, the Manager.”*¹¹

The matter of the lights on top of the war memorial featured again in the discussion of the Feilding Borough Council of 5 February 1903: *“The Lighting Committee referred the account from the Gas Company to the Council for consideration, excepting £22 17s 6d for Lucas lamps and £11 0s 8d for fittings, labor, etc., which were ordered for the Transvaal war memorial, and that incandescent burners be placed in all lamps in Kimbolton Road... In the consideration of the Lighting Committee's report, Cr Carthew stated that the Committee had struck out the items mentioned in the Gas Company's account. He enquired what authority had been given to procure the lamps, etc. The Mayor explained that the matter had been discussed in open Council, and verbal instructions had been given to procure them. When the lamps were obtained it was found they were unable to be fixed to the Transvaal War Memorial. After some discussion the report was eventually adopted, and it was resolved, on the motion of Cr Carthew, that the amount due to the Gas Company, as per account, be passed in full. Crs Cobbe and Tustin voted in the negative.”*¹²

The *Manawatu Times'* Feilding correspondent took a special interest in the memorial in November 1911, as it had clearly deteriorated somewhat by then. He wrote: *“RUN DRY, A NEGLECTED MEMORIAL At the close of the Boer War a memorial slab and drinking fountain was erected in the Square in loving and never forgetful memory of the brave troopers who fell in the Transvaal. To look back at the fountain no one would ever dream that the troopers were ever remembered. The slab is dirty, and it will soon be impossible to read the inscription. As a fountain it has actually run dry. Some of the taps*

¹¹ *Feilding Star*, 7 October 1902, p. 2

¹² *Feilding Star*, 6 February 1903, p. 2

are upside down and others are useless, and in its present condition the memorial is neither use nor ornament. The only service it renders is to hold up the lamps for lighting the Square. It is hoped that the Council will take steps to have the tablet cleaned up and the drinking fountain put in order."¹³

This evidently struck a chord with the Feilding community, and the next day he wrote that: *"Several leading Feilding people came into the Times' Feilding office yesterday and thanked me for referring to the shockingly neglected condition of the memorial and drinking fountain erected in memory of fallen troopers during the South African campaign. It is hoped that something will be done now to improve the condition of the memorial. As regards the usefulness of fountain, nobody seems to know why and when the taps were allowed to get into disuse, nor why the fountain went dry. The Councillors are now aware of the condition of it, and if they still remain inert, they cannot render themselves immune from criticism in allowing over £100 to be wasted in the centre of the town. For it is a waste and a shameful one when the memorial fountain is not serving the purpose for which it was erected, A much more economic gas lamp post could have been erected."*¹⁴

The same edition of the *Manawatu Times* then published a letter from a reader on the topic: *"ANOTHER PROTEST. To the Editor. Sir,—The trooper' memorial is in a disgraceful condition, and I am glad that your resident reporter has drawn the attention of the Council to the need of something being done. Talk about a neglected graveyard! This is infinitely worse, because the neglected memorial stands in the centre of the town for the public to gaze at. Visitors receive a very poor impression of the faithfulness of the citizens by such a neglected memorial. If the Council cannot do something towards cleaning it up, and laying on the water again, I would suggest that the inscription be completely covered up so that the reproach will not be staring people in the face each day.—I am, etc, KOPJE. Feilding, Nov. 21".*¹⁵

When Feilding held its Peace celebrations on Saturday, 19 July 1919, the South African War Memorial was the recipient of the Mayoral wreath - after which the large crowd stood in *"reverential silence"* while the 'Last Post' was sounded from the steps of the monument.¹⁶

However, the memorial was again drawing complaints in August 1919 – doubtless as a memorial to the WWI dead was being considered. A correspondent to the *Feilding Star* wrote that a community hospital would have been a better war memorial than the one they now had – which had seemingly been relocated out of the centre of the Square in the meantime: *"It (a hospital) certainly would serve a useful purpose, and be a fitting commemoration of the objects for which our soldiers fought—humanity. Not long ago the South African war was fought, and we had erected in the centre of the Square a monument. Where is it now? Pushed on one side, as another would be in years to come. If the difficulties in having a hospital are insurmountable, there are other means of creating a memorial to perpetuate the memory of the fallen and at the same time benefit the families of the returned men, which would be better than spending good money on statues and broken columns..."*¹⁷

¹³ *Manawatu Times*, 21 November 1911, p. 6

¹⁴ *Manawatu Times*, 22 November 1911 (p. 6)

¹⁵ *Manawatu Times*, 22 November 1911, p. 6

¹⁶ *Manawatu Times*, 21 July 1919, p. 5

¹⁷ *Feilding Star*, 21 August 1919, p. 4



Figure 4 This photo, taken in about 1986, shows this memorial as it appeared for around 85 years, and with the WWI/II War Memorial in the distance. Note the fittings for the drinking fountain then still in place on the memorial. (Source: Jock Phillips and Chris Maclean¹)

Feilding's First World War Memorial was duly unveiled nearby on 3 October 1923.¹⁸

Deteriorations and Restorations to the Present

The *Manawatu Times*' 'Feilding Page' of 25 September 1923 (p. 2) reported that: *"The local South African war memorial, which had a very weather-beaten appearance, has been painted by Messrs. Harford and Sons gratuitously giving it an appearance more in keeping with the new memorial to those who made the supreme sacrifice in the Great War."*

Doubtless the South African War Memorial has undergone an array of maintenance over the years, however, only that since the 1990s was sighted for this study. For example, the Manawatu District Council records state that in November 1997, the Feilding & District Historical Society wrote to the Council requesting that the dirty, discoloured Boer War Memorial be fixed. The Council then arranged for the Feilding RSA to clean it, while the committee of the Mainstreet Programme agreed that the memorial should be *"restored to its former glory with the gaslights."* Work was to start *"soon."*¹⁹

In December 1997, Helen Worboys of Feilding Promotion – Mainstreet Programme, requested that the Boer War Memorial be waterblasted etc., and the committee would also like to see the memorial moved to a better location where it could be another feature of Manchester Square. The following month Manawatu District Council replied stating that both war memorials would be cleaned for the Millennium celebrations, and also due to the Clocktower project. The letter's writer added that it would also be nice to see gas lamps fitted back onto the memorial again.²⁰

The first of the modern plaques on the memorial was unveiled in October 1999. This commemorated the 100th Anniversary of the first deployment of NZ Forces overseas on 21st October 1899, with 215 men and 250 horses sailing from Wellington on the SS 'Waiwera', bound for South Africa.

¹⁸ *Manawatu Times*, 2 October 1923, p. 2

¹⁹ Manawatu District Council: File 4/3513, 'Memorials - Heritage Management - General'

²⁰ Manawatu District Council: File 4/3513, 'Memorials - Heritage Management - General'

The second of the modern plaques is installed in the paving in front of the memorial. This commemorated the re-dedication of the memorial, following relocation, strengthening and restoration. New wrought iron lights that were replicas of original gas lamps were also installed. The plaque also explained the memorial's history. The work on this project was completed in April 2006.

Architect: F. de J. Clere²¹

Frederick de Jersey Clere was born at Walsden, Lancashire, England, on 7 January 1856, the second son of Ellen Vaughan and her husband, Henry Clere, an Anglican clergyman. Frederick was educated at St John's School, Clapton, and then at the age of 16 articled to the architect Edmund Evan Scott of Brighton. From 1875 to 1877 he was chief assistant in the London office of Robert Jewell Withers.

Clere emigrated with his family to New Zealand in 1877, arriving at Wellington on the *Hurunui* on 12 December. After working briefly in Wellington, he practised in Feilding from 1879 to 1883 and in Wanganui from 1883 to 1886. He married Mary Goodbehere at Feilding on 18 April 1883; they were to have three daughters and two sons. In 1886 Clere and his family moved to Wellington, where he was a partner in a succession of architectural firms.

The scope of Frederick Clere's work illustrates his versatility. From 1883 to 1888 he was architect to the Wanganui Education Board. He designed large country homes, such as Overton near Marton, and many houses in Wellington. His surviving commercial buildings include Wellington's AMP building and two harbour board buildings on Queen's Wharf, Wellington. Clere's early houses and his commercial and public buildings were generally conservative in design. His building techniques, however, were more innovative, particularly in their attempt to minimise earthquake and fire damage.

Clere is chiefly known, however, for the more than 100 churches he designed as architect to the Wellington Anglican diocese from 1883. Until 1904 these were of timber and were mostly in country districts; they are exemplified by St John's in Feilding. For urban churches on a larger scale Clere made increasing use of brick, as at All Saints' in Palmerston North, and ferro-concrete, notably for St Mary's in Karori, St Matthew's in Hastings, St Mary of the Angels in Wellington, and St Andrew's in New Plymouth. Almost without exception Clere's churches were an economical and unostentatious adaptation of the contemporary Gothic Revival style, expressed particularly by the pointed arch and a variety of roof-truss constructions and forms of tower or belfry. About 85 of these churches still stand.

Clere was elected an associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1882 and a fellow in 1886; he was honorary New Zealand secretary for many years. He resigned from the institute only in 1948 at the age of 92. Clere also served as president of the Wellington District Branch of the Association of Architects, and was a foundation member, treasurer and later a fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Architects. He published a number of articles, on art and architecture.

Apart from his involvement in his profession, Clere served on the Wellington City Council, the Lower Hutt Borough Council, the Anglican diocesan and general synods, and the licensing bench. He was a life member of the Waiwhetu Lodge of Freemasons and of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, with whom he exhibited watercolours. Clere was awarded the King George V Silver Jubilee Medal in 1935.

²¹ Maclean, Susan. 'Clere, Frederick de Jersey 1856 - 1952'. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 7 April 2006 URL: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>

Mary Clere died at Lower Hutt on 7 April 1904. On 17 October 1905, at St Paul's Cathedral Church, Wellington, Frederick Clere married Elizabeth (Bessie) Johnston Ingles; they were to have two daughters. He died at Wellington on 13 August 1952, at the age of 96; Bessie Clere had died in 1920. A devoted family man of deep personal integrity, he cared greatly for the reputation of his profession. In both his personal and professional lives he rejected affectation and excess. As an architect he is highly regarded for his success in marrying European styles to New Zealand conditions.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

As built, the Feilding memorial was a stepped obelisk with drinking fountains at the base on its four sides. Four lights on ornate brackets have been added to the top of the memorial. The drinking fountain basins have been filled in. Assuming the original materials was Sydney sandstone, this has since been rendered with cement render.

The memorial has several inscriptions. The north has "ER", the west has "Duty to God and Empire", the south has "VR" and the east has:

To the
Memory of
The brave men
From this district who
Obeying the call of duty
Sacrificed their lives
In the cause of their
Empire in the Boer War
South Africa
AD 1899-1902

A bronze plaque has been attached under the VR inscription, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the first deployment to South Africa on 21 October 1999.

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common of a number of different designs. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare²².

The memorial is located to the north east of the north-east quadrant of Feilding's Square. The obelisk is set within a square of brick paving to the north of the Feilding War memorial, which is situated in the centre of the quadrant. The two avenues of Kimbolton Road, the main road running through Feilding is to the immediate north of the memorial while the clock tower, on a central traffic island in the middle of the four quadrants, is to the west.

²² <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2016 for this memorial is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **moderate** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

As it exists today, the memorial has **moderate architectural, rarity** and **technological** values and **high representativeness** as an obelisk form, the most common form of war memorial in New Zealand. Presuming the Sydney sandstone is still under the cement render, the use of the material is somewhat rare.

The memorial has **moderate group** values as one of a number of Boer War memorials erected in small and provincial towns throughout New Zealand.

Based on original descriptions, the memorial appears to have **low** levels of **authenticity** with the two relocations, the change from a spiral design to an obelisk, the filling in of the drinking fountains, the removal of the taps and the addition of the lights.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern** and **cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in the Boer War 1899-1902.

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Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (Feilding Star, Manawatu Times, Nelson Evening Mail, NZ Herald): (as per footnotes and text)

Note that two old postcards used are from my own private collection – Val Burr

RONGOTEA WAR MEMORIAL – Douglas Square, Rongotea



Architect/builder: Jones and Co Palmerston North

Construction date: 1921

Visible materials: Granite, concrete

Architectural style: Aedicule with orb

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2018

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

The *Manawatu Times* of 3 December 1920 noted the decision by local residents to construct a memorial to soldiers who died in World War One.

“At a meeting at Rongotea this week it was decided to erect a soldiers’ memorial in Douglas Square at a cost of £500. Mr R. A. Callender presided over the meeting at which some twenty settlers were present. Mr A. Glover was appointed secretary of the committee, which is to have charge of the matter.”¹

The Governor General Viscount Jellicoe dedicated the memorial on 28 November 1921. Over one thousand people attended the ceremony at which the Governor General stated:

¹ https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/MT19201203.2.10?End_date=31-12-1930&phrase=0&query=Douglas+square+memorial+unveiling&start_date=01-01-1914&title=FS%2CFS%2CHC%2CMH%2CMS%2CMT%2CRAMA%2CTAIDT%2CWC%2CWH%2CWOODEX

“They have given us who remain behind an example of self sacrifice and devotion to duty which we should all strive to follow throughout our lives. They gave their service for the cause of the Empire in war; we should give our service for the cause of the Empire in peace.”²

The memorial commemorates the deaths of 15 soldiers who died in the two world wars.

The base of the memorial has the words “Jones and Co PN”, presumably the builders of the memorial.



Figure 1 Visount Jellicoe at the dedication of Rongotea War Memorial
<https://manawatuheritage.pncc.govt.nz/item/67a3b46a-fd7a-4ba8-88a2-d068082159ad>

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises an aedicule with an orb on top with splayed and rusticated pedestal, all of granite. The orb has 1914-18 inscribed on an angle, while underneath it is the words “For Humanity” and a list of those who died in action as well as those who died (presumably later from injuries). On the opposite side are the names of those killed in World War Two.

The plinth is of rendered concrete with three steps, the topmost of which is chamfered and lined out to resemble ashlar.

The aedicule was originally a shrine in the form of a miniature temple front containing a cult figure³. The orb, or globe, was a symbol of the Egyptian sun god, Re, and was popular in Victorian monuments

² Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014), page 54

³ Adam, Robert, *Classical Architecture A Complete Handbook*, Viking, London, 1992, page 297

where it was representative of the creator. Obelisks were the most common design with cenotaphs, gates and arches the next most common. Aedicule memorials were rare.

The memorial is located in the north-west quadrant of Douglas Square in the centre of Rongotea. The site is grassed with flower beds in the south east corner, trees lining the northern perimeter and several seats facing in towards the memorial. Mersey and Thames Streets divide the square equally into four quadrants with a roundabout at its centre.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2018 for this memorial is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **moderate** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, and cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an aedicule and orb-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **high rarity, representativeness** and **group** values as one of few aedicule style memorials erected throughout the region but one of many in New Zealand installed to remember soldiers who died in both world wars.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as, unlike an adjacent memorial, it has been retained on its original site.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in both world wars and where memorial services have been held.

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KIMBOLTON MEMORIAL GATES - 2863 Kimbolton Road



Architect/builder: C.L. Shaw (builder)

Construction date: Not known

Visible materials: Rendered concrete, steel gates, granite plaques

Architectural style: Gates

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2018, Val Burr 2019

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹

Kimbolton's War Memorial takes the form of the entranceway to the town's Domain on Kimbolton Road. This consists of the memorial gates and the walls on either side of it, which include two plaques that name the local men killed in the two World Wars.

Twenty two names from World War One are inscribed on the southern wall, which is headed by the text: *"To the Glory of God, and in grateful memory of the men of the district who gave their lives. 1914-1918."* A further sixteen names of men lost during the Second World War are similarly recorded on the northern wall.

Many of the soldiers from the First World War plaque had previously attended Kimbolton School, and a separate memorial tablet to them had been unveiled at the school on 3 February 1921. That memorial recognised both the nine former pupils who had been killed, and also those who had served and returned.²

Although Kimbolton's Domain is not the subject of this study, it is clear that it was an early addition to the town – the *Feilding Star* of 15 January 1900 (p. 2) recording that: *"The first meeting of the newly-*

¹ Olsen, Peter, Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One, Memorials of the Manawatu District*, Janet Doyle, Feilding, 2015, page 36

² *Manawatu Times*, 4 February 1921, p. 5

formed Kimbolton Domain Board was held on Saturday evening. The Board consists of the following gentlemen: — Messrs A. H. Tompkins, Wm. Morton. H. Fowler, J. London, Dr Greig, H. Hodge, and R. Burne. Mr R. Burne was elected chairman. It was decided to call tenders for leasing the sections the Board have at present under their control.”

An extensive collection of records formerly belonging to the Kimbolton Domain Board, starting with the 1915 Minute Book, are now held by Archives Central in Feilding, on behalf of Manawatu District Council. Similarly held there are the records (between 1951 and 1961) of the Kimbolton and District War Memorial Committee.³ These various records are likely to contain other useful information on the planning for and maintaining of the memorial over a considerable period.

Construction of the Memorial

Archival records relating to the construction of the memorial gates include a letter dated 6 August 1953, advising Mr C.L. Shaw, of 187 South Street, Feilding, (who was a plasterer and who undertook general concrete work) that the Kimbolton and District War Memorial Committee had accepted his tender of £379/14/0d for the erection of the *“War Memorial Gateway at Kimbolton.”* The cost of the plaques themselves and the wording to be inscribed thereon, was additional to this. The original plan had been to have marble plaques, however, the aforementioned letter dated 6 August 1953 advised that the committee had decided to instead use grey granite for the plaques, even though this was *“considerably more expensive.”*⁴

On 26 February 1954, Mr R.H. Thevenard, chairman of the Kimbolton War Memorial Committee (and apparently also a returned WWII soldier⁵), wrote to the Director of Palmerston North’s Parks and Reserves. He referred to a visit the Director had made to Kimbolton Reserve several years previously, along with Mr K.C. Hocking of Massey College, in relation to the proposed planting of a Memorial Drive at the Domain. Thevenard was advising that the committee had decided to take the advice given at that time to plant Golden Elms. It had not been possible to obtain the necessary 24 trees the previous winter, and so now the committee wished to take possession of the trees in time for the coming season. By this time the gateway had been completed, and the committee hoped to have the driveway laid out this year.

Dedication of the Memorial

The *Manawatu Times* of 26 April 1954 (p. 2) outlined the history of the memorial and also the events that took place on the day of its official dedication. Under the headline *“Kimbolton’s War Memorial Dedicated”*, the article reads:

A fine war memorial gateway for the domain, the result of local efforts, was dedicated at Kimbolton on Sunday. Inserted in the stonework of the gateway were two roll of honour tablets bearing the names of soldiers from the district who were killed in the two World Wars.

Plans for a war memorial were first made in about 1943, when a committee was formed, but it was not until recently that it was decided that the memorial should take the form of a gateway. Originally the project included the construction of the pavilion on the recreation ground. This was not proceeded with because of increased costs and lack of support.

³ Archives Central (Feilding): http://archivescentral.org.nz/en/manawatu_dc (Search “Kimbolton Domain Board” and “Kimbolton and District War Memorial Committee Correspondence”)

⁴ Letter, 6 August 1953, Kimbolton and Districts War Memorial Committee to Mr G.L. Shaw, ‘Kimbolton and District War Memorial Committee correspondence’, File No: MDC 00150 : 1 : 1: http://archivescentral.org.nz/manawatu_dc/topics/show/95627-kimbolton-and-district-war-memorial-committee-correspondence (Archives Central, Feilding)

⁵ D. Thomas Waugh, *North to Kimbolton (Birmingham)*, (Kimbolton, 1986), p. 89

Work on the gateway was started about seven months ago. The structure was completed sometime in February and since then the gateway has been in use.

The memorial project is not yet complete, however. A memorial avenue of golden elms is to be constructed as a driveway into the domain. The surface will be sealed.

The Rev. F.E. Fleury performed the dedicatory service, following which the roll of honour tablets were unveiled by Major-General L.M. Inglis, of Palmerston North. Wreaths were then placed on the war memorial.

Major-General Inglis addressed the gathering during the Anzac service which was held later at the town hall. The soldiers who served with those who were now remembered, had a roll call of their own, he said, but one could not go through it in a few minutes. It was impossible to call the whole roll.

Tribute to Commanders

Major-General Inglis said that there was a class of men who should not be forgotten but their name was probably unknown to the majority of those present. They were the regimental commanders. "More depended on them than on any other men," he said.

The duties carried out by a regimental commander were considered by some people as safe, but, he said, in one instance the infantry lost 10 or 11 officers in a few weeks. Four of the officers held a rank higher than that of Lieutenant Colonel.

Among those killed was the first Maori commander, who led the 28th battalion. Had he lived, said Major-General Inglis, the commander would probably have been a great Maori leader.

Major-General Inglis mentioned several other soldiers who had distinguished themselves. "It was men, like these who were worth their weight in gold," he said. Among those who did not return from the war, one found the best leaders, men who volunteered for dangerous missions, and the men who fought to save New Zealand from an attack.

Clergymen officiating at the service were the Rev. Mr Fleury, the Rev. A. Wilde and the Rev. R Richards."

Following the 10:45am dedication of the memorial, the town's Anzac Service was then held at the Kimbolton Hall.⁶

The war memorial remains the focus of Kimbolton's Anzac Day commemorations, and a flag pole has also recently been installed alongside the memorial to be part of the display. Recent annual notices outlining local Anzac Day events typically announced that participants would assemble outside the Kimbolton Hall, and then at 8:00am they would march to the Kimbolton Domain memorial gates for the wreath-laying – before returning to the hall for the memorial service and then morning tea. The 2016 event further advertised that the school pupils would also place white crosses.⁷

⁶ Letter, 31 March 1954, Kimbolton and Districts War Memorial Committee to Major General L. Inglis: 'Kimbolton and District War Memorial Committee correspondence', File No: MDC 00150 : 1 : 1 (Archives Central, Feilding)

⁷ 'Manawatu Standard, 24 April 2015: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/67977586/wrap-of-anzac-day-services-in-wider-manawatu> ; Feilding-Rangitikei Herald, 21 April 2016: Anzac Day Services timetable: <https://www.pressreader.com/new-zealand/feilding-rangitikei-herald/20160421/281835757879465> ; Manawatu District Council: 'Our District News', 20 April 2017: <http://www.mdc.govt.nz/mdc/pdf/bulletins/20170420.pdf> ; Feilding-Rangitikei Herald, 19 April 2018: <https://www.pressreader.com/new-zealand/feilding-rangitikei-herald/20180419/281642485767555>

While the original plan was to plant 24 Golden Elm trees to form a memorial avenue alongside the driveway leading from the gateway into the reserve, recent photos show that only about 12 are there now. Whether the 'missing' 12 trees were in fact ever planted, has not been researched.

A further memorial to those who died in World War Two is located on the north wall.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial is an entrance to the Kimbolton Domain and comprises symmetrical walls with a 'zig zag' plan and central steel gates. The walls are terminated on the street side with steel panels matching the gates and a return wall. On each of the main walls is a marble plaque with the names of the dead from World War One (on the south wall) and Two (on the north wall). In front of the walls are two rendered steps. A flagpole sits near the memorial gates.

Gates were symbolic of entering heaven or passage into the afterlife and were a popular form of memorial, particularly for schools. Obelisks were the most common design with cenotaphs, gates and arches the next most common.

The gates mark the entry to Kimbolton Domain, which, after passing over the cattle grid, has a central drive lined with mature deciduous trees. Sports fields are located either side of the drive and the clubrooms and grandstand to the south west. Opposite the gates is a line of houses beyond which is farmland sloping away towards the east.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** values as a good example of a gate-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen soldiers in both world wars.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it has been retained unchanged and in situ.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern, cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in the two World Wars.

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‘*Manawatu Standard*, 24 April 2015: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/67977586/wrap-of-anzac-day-services-in-wider-manawatu>

New Zealand History: Kimbolton War Memorial: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/kimbolton-war-memorial> (Ministry of Culture and Heritage)

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http://archivescentral.org.nz/manawatu_dc/topics/show/95627-kimbolton-and-district-war-memorial-committee-correspondence Archives Central, Feilding)

IMAGES



Figure 1 Kimbolton Domain's entrance on March 2008, before the memorial was cleaned up and the flagpole installed, shortly before the World War One centenary activities began around the country and world. (Source: Google Street View)



Figure 2 The Kimbolton War Memorial photographed on 25 April 2013 for the 'Banditriders Blog'. The flagpole does not appear to be installed at that time. However, the memorial had already been cleaned as part of a Manawatu-wide project led by Peter Olsen. He installed flagpoles beside the district's war memorials wherever possible in the course of the project. (Source: <http://banditriders.blogspot.co.nz/2013/04/anzac-day-ride.html>)



Figure 1 The memorial gates at the Kimbolton Domain in May 2015, with the Golden Elm trees lining the memorial drive that were also planted in 1954 as part of the town's memorial project. (Source: Google Street View)



Figure 2 The line of Golden Elm trees that were planted in 1954 to be part of the memorial, after the memorial gates were completed. The photo will have been taken in wintertime in recent years, but the date is not apparent. (Source: Google maps)



Figure 3 The plaques on the Kimbolton War Memorial, photographed before the memorial was restored. (Source: New Zealand History, 'Kimbolton War Memorial': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/kimbolton-war-memorial>)

ROWLAND MEMORIAL – 22 Dampneys Road, Tiakitahuna



Architect: Unknown

Construction date: 1989

Visible materials: Cement rendered concrete and stone cairn with rock on top, timber gateway and fence

Architectural style: Cairn

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2016

Proposed category: Category B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The Rowland Memorial in Dampney's Road, Tiakitahuna, was unveiled on Saturday, 28th January 1989, to acknowledge the establishment in 1867 of the first stage of the family farm by English-born David Rowland – although the memorial site is not part of that original purchase. The memorial also acknowledged David's Maori wife Marara, who came into the story a short time later. The memorial consists of a stone cairn and plaque within a small fenced-off area of land. This tiny plot of land also has a carved gateway leading from Dampney's Road. The decision to create a cairn was made as ancient Celtic monuments such as this are familiar in England. Meanwhile the carved gateway represents Marara's Maori heritage.

The key people involved with the construction of the memorial included the brothers Selwyn and Innes Rowland, and also their cousin Ray Rowland. Ray had undertaken the carving, assisted by then Massey University historian John Bevan Ford, who is well known for his art-work and carvings. At the unveiling, John Bevan Ford told those present that that the carving was perfect for its role, in that it represented both the Maori and Pakeha backgrounds of the couple.

Clyde Rowland, son of Ray, advises that the cairn is made from stones from the Manawatu River, with the symbolism being the place of the river in the land and the lives of the family.



Figure 1 David and Marara Rowland¹

Background

In January 1964, the Rowland family published a 24-page family history book entitled *The Centenary of the Rowland Family in New Zealand: 1864-1964*. This explained how David Rowland had been born in Pirton, Worcester, England, in 1843, being the son of a railway official. He had been interested in agriculture and had thus become a farm labourer. He soon decided his prospects elsewhere might be better than in England, and so in 1863 he sailed for New Zealand, where he turned to gold mining for a time. In 1867 he finally settled on what became the family farm at Tiakitahuna – albeit that the initial portion was only eighteen acres (sic). The Pakeha population in the early days struggled with the Maori name of the locality, and so they came to refer to it as Jackeytown – and this remains the name of the road that leads to the cairn in Dampneys Road.¹

The 1914 obituary of David Rowland (senior) takes up his story:

OBITUARY: MR DAVID ROWLAND, SENR: The ranks of the pioneers of the Manawatu, which are fast being depleted by the hand of death, have suffered another loss by the passing away of Mr David Rowland, senr., of Tiakitahuna. Death occurred on Saturday evening after but a short illness, Mr Rowland being confined to his bed only since Tuesday last.

The deceased gentleman was very well known all along the coast, and as an early settler did much to convert the bush country of the Manawatu into habitable farm land and to promote settlement. He was a sterling settler in every respect and was held, with the members of his family, in the very highest esteem. The pastoral industry of the Manawatu also received benefit at his hands, Mr Rowland having been a considerable importer of Romney Marsh sheep, as well as a very successful breeder.

Many prizes and championships were gained by his flocks in the show ring in different parts of the Dominion. The late Mr Rowland was a genial personality, who made many friends. He belonged to the Masonic Order, being one of the oldest members of United Manawatu Lodge.

Born in Worcestershire, England, in 1843, Mr Rowland followed agricultural pursuits until 1864, when he left the Old Country for New in the ship British Empire. Arriving in the colony he turned his attention to the West Coast gold diggings and worked there and on the Wakamarina field with

¹ *The Centenary of the Rowland Family in New Zealand: 1864-1964* (Palmerston North, 1964), p. 6. Note that this acreage might not have been exact according to other records (see below), but the matter was not researched further.

varying success. Tiring of the goldfields he betook himself to the occupation of his earlier days, buying his first land in the Rangitikei district in 1867. He made several subsequent purchases, and finally settled at Tiakitahuna, where he lived until his death.

Deceased leaves a widow and family of five sons and three daughters to mourn their loss. The members of the family are Messrs George (Taumarunui), Harry and Timothy (Ohau), David and Wm. Rowland (Tiakitahuna), Mesdames Robinson (Hillside), Gordonton (Waikato), and Bevan (Manakau). The late Mr Rowland was twice married.²

Marara Rowland was born in about 1854, and she was the daughter of Koroneira and his wife Turuhira. They were members of the Tukorehe hapu of Ngati Raukawa, and Koroneira was described as “a Tohunga of the old school, who performed the ceremony of placing the sacred soil under the altar of Rangiatea,” the historic church at Otaki. Ngati Tukorehe had also donated the main poles that supported Rangiatea.³ This church was burnt down in 1995 and a replica was reopened in its place in 2003.⁴

Clearly at first David and Marara lived in a de facto relationship (in the European sense of the times). They then married in 1879 with Marara’s name being given as “Marara Whakawhitu” on their marriage registration.⁵ However, the first of their children, John, had been born in about 1872 (he died in 1892, aged 20), followed by George in about 1874 (he died in 1940, aged 66), and then by Henry and Sarah. While John’s birth was never registered, the births of George, Henry and Sarah were belatedly registered together in 1903.⁶ The next child, also never registered, was Maria, who was born in about 1879, and who died in 1900 aged 21. Perhaps her death, combined with her mother’s death (or perhaps even their father’s remarriage), triggered the late registrations of the other three surviving children. After Maria’s birth came David Jnr. (1880), Ann (1884), Mary (1886), (Timothy 1887) and William (1891)⁷

Marara died on 27 February 1898, aged 44, and she is buried at Terrace End Cemetery, the cemetery record referring to her as ‘Maria’. Her daughter Maria was buried in the same plot sixteen months later. David snr was then buried in the adjoining plot in 1914. Sons George (died 17 September 1940) and Timothy (died 28 May 1964) are also buried in David’s plot. Meanwhile John, who had died in 1892, is also buried at Terrace End Cemetery, but in Public Reserve No. 1.⁸

Two years after Marara’s death, David returned to England, where he bought some stud sheep for his property, Abbotswood Farm, at Tiakitahuna.⁹ While there he also met Miss Fanny Salt, daughter of John Salt of Winshaw Farm, Macclesfield Forest, Cheshire, England. She came out to New Zealand in 1902, and the couple married at St. Peters Church, Wellington, on 10 January 1903.¹⁰ By this time David Rowland had built a new house opposite Tiakitahuna School and this was the property that was named ‘Abbotswood’. This house is still owned by members of the Rowland family.

² *Manawatu Standard*, 17 August 1914, p. 4

³ *The Centenary of the Rowland Family in New Zealand: 1864-1964*, p. 19

⁴ Peter J. Lineham, 'Missions and missionaries - Māori converts', Te Ara - the *Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/artwork/28014/rangiatea-church> (accessed 28 November 2016)

⁵ Marriage Registration No: 1879/2455: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

⁶ Birth Registrations: 1903/22180 (George), 1903/22181 (Henry) and 1903/22182 (Sarah): <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

⁷ Birth Registrations: 1880/18317 (David jnr), 1884/11844 (Ann), 1886/2160 (Mary), 1887/75 (Timothy), 1891/1889 (William): <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

⁸ Terrace End Cemetery, <http://www.pncc.govt.nz/services/onlineservices/cemetery-and-cremation-search/> Note that that all but John are listed as ‘Rowlands’.

⁹ *Auckland Star*, 28 August 1900, p. 3

¹⁰ *Manawatu Times*, 13 January 1903, p. 2.

While much of David Rowland's life was described in his obituary above, another article of note was published in the *Manawatu Standard* of 6 February 1912, on the occasion of his 69th birthday. Attendees of the function at the Rowland home included the Mayor of Palmerston North, Mr J.A. Nash. Nash's speech at the event included describing Rowland's contribution to the agricultural and pastoral industries of the district, along with his importations of pedigree sheep. Rowland then spoke of how he had bought his first property at Tiakitahuna in 1867 and that he had settled on it a year later. At that time, all his goods had to be packed in over the survey tracks.¹¹



BROTHERS Selwyn, left, and Innes Rowland unveil a brass plaque dedicated to their grandparents in a family ceremony at Tiakitahuna last Saturday. The family farm was settled by David and Marara Rowland in 1867, the first settlers in the area. As well as the stone cairn (an ancient Celtic monument), a Maori gateway, carved by another grandson, Ray Rowland, represents Marara's Maori heritage.

The memorial is on the Rowland family farm and family members from all over the country and some from Australia gathered for the dedication, given by Reverend Cyril Brown, of Waikanae. Massey University historian John Bevan Ford told the family the 1989 memorial, representing both the European and Maori backgrounds of the couple, was perfect and the family was to be congratulated.

Photo by Maurice Costello

Figure 2 Note that the original stone on top of the cairn in this photo is smaller than the present one. The top stone shown here was destroyed by vandals. Source: *Manawatu Standard* – Tuesday, 31st January 1989, p. 4

the couple's Maori and Pakeha heritage. The decision was made to construct the cairn, and the site it now occupies was in due course surveyed off. It is now recorded as a cemetery, even though no-one is

Mrs Fanny Rowland, known as 'Mater' to the family, remained in New Zealand throughout the war years. She was active with various organisations, including being elected a member of the A. & P. Association in 1916,¹² and as a regular donor to the Manawatu Patriotic Fund.¹³ In October 1923, Mrs Rowland announced that she intended to go back to England early in 1924 for an extended holiday.¹⁴ She duly returned to Macclesfield, England, and remained there for the rest of her life.¹⁵ The Rowland family still have letters she wrote to them, and these document a lot of the family's history. There were no children from David Rowland's second marriage.

The Rowland family held a reunion at Karere and Longburn over the weekend of 18-19 January 1964, and the family history book, *The Centenary of the Rowland Family in New Zealand: 1864-1964*, was published in association with that. This marked the centenary of David Rowland arriving in New Zealand.

In the latter 1980s, Innes Rowland, son of David jnr, decided that he wanted something created in memory of his grandparents. He also wanted it to represent the

¹¹ *Manawatu Standard*, 6 February 1912, p. 5

¹² *Manawatu Standard*, 16 May 1916, p. 5

¹³ *Manawatu Times*, 31 July 1916, p. 2

¹⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 22 October 1923, p. 3

¹⁵ *The Centenary of the Rowland Family in New Zealand: 1864-1964*, p. 11

actually buried there.¹⁶ Their cousin, Ray Rowland (son of Timothy) then undertook the carving of the figures on the gateway to the memorial, in association with the well-known Maori artist and carver, John Bevin Ford (1930-2005).¹⁷

Completing the memorial came none too soon, as Innes Rowland died on 27 April 1989, and Selwyn died on 13 April 1990.¹⁸

A noticeable difference between the photo of the memorial when it was unveiled, and how it looks now (other than the growth of the trees surrounding it), is that the stone on the top of the cairn is noticeably larger now than in 1989. Clyde Rowland advises that the original one was smashed by vandals at an early stage, possibly in the mistaken belief that there was a time capsule inside it. The top cap of the cairn could in fact then be lifted off, but the vandals took a hammer to it instead. The present larger stone was then installed onto the cairn as part of the repairs.¹⁹

Certificates of Title

The 1867 *Wellington Provincial Government Gazettes* record that at the Crown Land auction held at Wellington on 26 February 1867, David Rowland purchased the three-acre Sections 75, 77, 79 and 81 that were among the Rural Sections in the Karere Block. These totalled twelve acres and cost him £24. Meanwhile, the adjoining 106-acre Section 90, where the memorial is located, went to James Mitchell snr for £106. Mitchell had also purchased Sections 85 and 87 (also adjoining Section 90), totalling another six acres.²⁰ What James Mitchell did with his land was not researched, but a note penned into the copy of the family history book sighted for this study, records “1869” alongside this property.²¹ Possibly David Rowland occupied the property at that point. Note that while David Rowland’s 1867 three-acre sections were on the boundary of the land where the memorial now is, he did not purchase the actual adjoining section. That (Section 69 – along with its adjoining Section 71) had been purchased by John Linder.²²

Clyde Rowland points out that when the locality was surveyed prior to this 1867 auction, it was thought that a town would be developed there – and this was the reason for the collection of three-acre sections. It also helped inspire the name ‘Jackeytown’ – in addition to the better known link to the Maori name of ‘Tiakitahuna.’²³

When this memorial was erected in 1989, the Certificate of Title then still in place was WN5/265. This CT was first been issued to David Rowland in 1875 for the 106-acre riverbank property. However, it had been preceded by WN1/95, which was presumably the one Mitchell had held. WN5/265 then records that the property was in due course passed to various of David Rowland’s descendants in shares, and this is how the property was at the time the memorial was created.

In March 1989 a new CT was issued for 7.1620 hectares of the property (stretching between the river and Dampney’s Road), this being WN52A/118. Its owners were listed as Clyde Raymond Rowland, Gail Vivienne Yates, Louise Alice Williams, Shane Innes Rowland and David Evans Rowland. Then later in 1989, this property was subdivided into two parts, with Clyde Raymond Rowland taking over the

¹⁶ Interview with May Rowland, 27 November 2016

¹⁷ *The Guardian*, 14 October 2005: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/oct/14/guardianobituaries.artsobituaries>

¹⁸ *Manawatu Standard*: 29 April 1989, p. 31, 14 April 1990, p. 31; Also PNCC:

<http://www.pncc.govt.nz/services/onlineservices/cemetery-and-cremation-search/> and Tararua District Council: http://www.tararua.govt.nz/Living_Here/Community_Information/Cemeteries

¹⁹ Interview with Clyde Rowland, 5 January 2017

²⁰ *Wellington Provincial Government Gazette*, 1867, pp. 27-30, Ref: 1867/69

²¹ *The Centenary of the Rowland Family in New Zealand: 1864-1964*, p. 9

²² *Wellington Provincial Government Gazette*, 1867, pp. 27-30, Ref: 1867/69; Also, the plan shown on Certificate of Title WN 5/265 (1875)

²³ Interview with Clyde Rowland, 5 January 2017

shares of the other parties previously involved. The present CT – WN53C/506 – was then issued on 2 October 1998 for the 82 square metres more or less that contains the memorial. Clyde Raymond Rowland remains as its owner.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial is composed of a cement rendered concrete and stone cairn crowned with a large rock and a bronze plaque towards the upper street elevation. Facing the road is a carved timber gateway and a picket fence. The picket fence and a post and wire fence on the sides and rear surround the small plot of land on which the memorial is located. Several large trees grow at the rear of the memorial and are beginning to engulf it. The memorial is located in an area of flat farmland with large trees lining the road.

The inscription on the memorial reads

” A memorial to
David Rowland
and his wife
Marara Koroniria
Who settled this land
1867
Erected by their descendants
1989
Tatou Tatou”

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2014 for this memorial is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The memorial has **moderate local** significance for **physical, historical and cultural heritage** values.

The memorial gateway has **moderate architectural** values in its uncommon combination of Maori and Pakeha figures. Its association with internationally regarded Maori artist and carver John Bevan Ford and the local pioneer farming family of David and Marara Rowling contribute to **moderate people, commemorative** and **educative** values. In recognising the contribution of Marara nee Turuhira from the Tukorehe hapu of Ngati Raukawa, the memorial has **moderate cultural** values.

The memorial has **moderate authenticity** with the only known change to the top most rock having been replaced following the original being vandalised.

SOURCES

Printed Sources

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Duncan, Wayne, 'Last train to Foxton 1959':

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/51227209@N03/30767034515/>

www.facebook.com references as per footnotes ('Random Snippets of History: Manawatu & Beyond')

Lineham, Peter J., 'Missions and missionaries - Māori converts', Te Ara - the *Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/artwork/28014/rangiatea-church>

Manawatu District Council: <http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Home> : online satellite imagery Certificates of Title.

Palmerston North City Council: <http://www.pncc.govt.nz/> : Terrace End Cemetery records

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Auckland Star*, *Manawatu Standard*, *Manawatu Times*); (as per footnotes)

Tararua District Council: <http://www.tararua.govt.nz/Home> : Cemetery records

The Guardian, 14 October 2005:

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/oct/14/guardianobituaries.artsobituaries>

Other Sources

Interviews with May Rowland (on 27 November 2016), Clyde Rowland (on 5 January 2017) and also conversations with other members of the Rowland/Tait-Jamieson family, including Cathy Tait-Jamieson (nee Rowland).

The plaque alongside the Rowland pou on display at Te Manawa, Palmerston North.

RANGIWAHIA WAR MEMORIAL - 2529 Rangiwahia Road, Rangiwahia



Architect/builder:

Construction date: 1921

Visible materials: Granite, concrete

Architectural style: Obelisk

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2018

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

In April 1917 a concert was held by the Patriotic Committee to raise funds for a memorial to soldiers from the district who had been killed in World War One. £32 was raised from the event.¹

The *Feilding Star* of 13 March 1919 reported that the funds raised by the Red Cross at the Rangiwahia Horticultural and Industrial Society Show would be used to fund a memorial to fallen soldiers.² The *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus* of 20 September notes the request from the Rangiwahia War Memorial Committee to define a site for the memorial at the meeting of the Kiwitea County

¹ Olsen, Peter, Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One, Memorials of the Manawatu District*, Janet Doyle, Feilding, 2015

² https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/FS19190313.2.46?end_date=31-12-1930&phrase=0&query=rangiwahia+war+memorial&start_date=01-01-1918&title=FS%2CHC%2CMH%2CMS%2CMT%2CRAMA%2CTAIDT%2CWC%2CWH%2CWOODEX

Council.³ On 19 October 1920 the Rangiwahia War Memorial Committee requested a permit for the erection of the memorial from the Kiwitea County Council proposed on the site adjacent to the Rangiwahia hall⁴.

On September 14 1921 the Minister of Lands, D H Guthrie unveiled the memorial⁵. *The Hawera and Normanby Star* made the following observations of the opening:

“Today the Hon. D H Guthrie (Minister of Lands) unveiled a soldiers’ memorial at Rangiwahia. The settlers’ built the memorial except the work requiring an expert. One feature was that each school child placed a stone in the foundation block.”⁶

A further community memorial dedicated to men who were killed in both world wars was installed opposite the obelisk, which was opened by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Sir William Bodkin on April 28 1954. Rolls of honour from now closed local schools commemorating those who served and died in both world wars are held in the hall.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises an obelisk of granite⁷ with stepped and chamfered granite pedestal. At the base of the obelisk facing the street are inscribed the words:

“In memory of soldiers of Rangiwahia and surrounding districts who fell in the Great War
1914-18

For King and Country”

The names of the 21 Rangiwahia soldiers killed are inscribed on the north and south faces of the obelisk.

The plinth is of cement render and has five steps and a granite plaque fixed to the upper step. This has the names of eight soldiers who died in the Second World War.

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare⁸.

³ https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/RAMA19200920.2.16?end_date=31-12-1930&phrase=0&query=rangiwahia+war+memorial&start_date=01-01-1918&title=FS%2CHC%2CMH%2CMS%2CMT%2CRAMA%2CTAIDT%2CWC%2CWH%2CWOODEX

⁴ https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/FS19201019.2.43?end_date=31-12-1930&phrase=0&query=rangiwahia+war+memorial&start_date=01-01-1918&title=FS%2CHC%2CMH%2CMS%2CMT%2CRAMA%2CTAIDT%2CWC%2CWH%2CWOODEX

⁵ <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiwahia-war-memorial>

⁶ <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/HNS19211115.2.37>

⁷ <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/MT19211018.2.66?query=rangiotu%20war%20memorial>

⁸ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

The memorial is located to the north of the hall, built in 1907, and has a concrete fence with steel hoops set into its top with a steel gate facing the road and another facing the hall. The sides and rear of the monument has a timber fence. To the rear is a flagpole. The site is part of the Rangiwahia Recreation Reserve and is flat with surrounding paddocks and rolling hills to the east and west.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as, unlike many war memorials, it has been retained on its original site.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in the two world wars and where memorial services have been held.

SOURCES

Printed Sources

Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

Online Sources

Google Streetview: www.google.co.nz (as per footnote)

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers>

'Rangiwahia war memorial': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiwahia-war-memorial>
(Ministry for Culture and Heritage)

MEMORIAL GATES, FORMER SANSON SCHOOL – 2A Dundas Road, Sanson



Architect/builder: Not known

Construction date: 1924

Visible materials: Marble, concrete, steel gates, lead lettering

Architectural style: Gates

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2018

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹

On July 24 1919 a public meeting was held at the town hall to discuss a memorial to commemorate those who had fought in World War One. In 1920 the Manawatu County Council confirmed that a captured German machine gun should be installed in the school grounds. Four years later, on August 31 1924, Major General C W Melville, General Officer commanding the New Zealand Defence Force unveiled the memorial which comprised a fence, gates and plaques on four posts outside Sanson School, on Dundas Road, State Highway 3 through Sanson.

The Evening Star noted the Major General's comments when unveiling the memorial. "*I think the spirit of the New-Zealand troops, whether on Gallipoli or in Egypt, Mesopotamia, or France, was a magnificent one,*" said Major-General C. W. Melvill, General Officer Commanding the N.Z. Defence Forces, when unveiling the local war memorial at Sanson on Sunday afternoon. "*I am not a New Zealander, but I had the privilege of commanding New Zealand men,*" he added, continuing to state that on the field and off it he had found their actions very fine.

¹ Olsen, Peter, Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One, Memorials of the Manawatu District*, Janet Doyle, Fielding, 2015

He added the following, indicating the reason for the location of the memorial outside a school:

“By us their deeds and names will never be forgotten, but we must make an appeal to the young generation to keep their memory clear”.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a rough-cast rendered concrete fence, pillars, an ornate steel gate and marble plaques. The plaques are on the gate posts, indented from the road and posts located on the road boundary and either side of the gate posts and forward of the gate.

Each of the posts either side of the gate has a plaque headed with “In Memoriam” and the names of six soldiers each. The post to the south of the south gate posts has a plaque on the road side, which states:

“This fence was erected by the residents of Sanson and District to the glory of God and in the memory of the men who fought and dies for the country

The Motherland called and they went

1914-1918”

The northern side of the same post has another marble plaque, which is headed “Roll of Honour” and lists 19 names. The post on the opposite side also has a marble plaque headed “Roll of Honour” and another 19 names. Marble plaques are fixed to four of the pillars, two either side of the central gate, which is indented from the road with curved walls.

With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare².

The memorial gates are located on the old Sanson School site. The old school site is on the south side of Dundas Road at the northern end of Sanson. The school buildings are one of a number in a strip development either side of the road, making up the small community. The site and Sanson is surrounded by farmland, which is generally flat. In October 1991, Sanson School relocated to facilities at 2970 State Highway One, Sanson, which previously housed the Manawatu District Council. A Sanson War Memorial Marble Tablet was re-dedicated at the new school site in 1993, which is the subject of a separate heritage report. The memorial gates are now in private ownership.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low to high local** significance for **physical, historical and cultural** heritage values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of a gate-styled war memorial using common materials and design of the period.

² <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it remains on its original site.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern** and **cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in World War One.

SOURCES

Printed Sources

Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

Online Sources

Google Streetview: www.google.co.nz (as per footnote)

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers>

'Sansons war memorial': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/sanson-war-memorial> (Ministry for Culture and Heritage)

HITCHMAN'S CORNER PIONEERS' MEMORIAL WATER TROUGH – Kimbolton Road, Feilding



Architect: -

Construction date: 1939

Visible materials: Concrete

Architectural style: -

Use/building type: Water trough

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2016

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

It is easy to drive along Kimbolton Road without noticing a very large concrete water trough in the long grass many metres from the roadway - near that road's intersection with Colyton Road and outside the front fence of No. 601 Kimbolton Road. It can be even harder to imagine nowadays that there is any particular significance to the trough beyond its obvious use for watering passing livestock – not that many of them are likely to use it nowadays. However, the trough does have a unique significance. A closer look at the trough – after pulling away some of the overgrowth – reveals a marble plaque embedded into the front of the trough that reads:

Erected
by the W.D.F.U. and the
Farmers Union
To Commemorate the Pioneers
Of the District, and to Mark
Hitchman's Corner
December 1939



Figure 1 Marble plaque on the front of the trough, photo Val Burr, 27 November, 2016

Background

In the old days the Kimbolton Road-Colyton Road intersection was known as Hitchman's Corner. The sources of the name were farmer George Hitchman, and his wife Maria, who had moved to a 100-acre property in Kimbolton Road, opposite the future trough site, in about 1878. They were some of the earliest settlers to live in Feilding, having arrived on the ship 'Salisbury' in 1873. Their daughter Catherine was the first baby girl born in Feilding. The family's story is covered in Dorothy Mingins and Dorothy Pilkington's book *Swamps, Sandflies and Settlers: Feilding and the Manchester Block - The European settler families* (pp. 30-31).¹ The speeches on the day of the trough's unveiling that are recorded below, also provide more detail of the couple's contribution to the district and the location.

In 1902, William Wescombe Corpe erected a creamery on his Kimbolton Road property opposite the Feilding-Ashhurst Road (Hitchman's Corner).² This description places the creamery very close the future location of the trough – however, it seems likely to have been long gone by 1939 when the trough was constructed.

The earliest references located during this study to the need for a trough in this vicinity, ties it into the story of the succession of Kiwitea Bridges – these being located about a kilometre from the trough in the direction of Feilding. The bridges on this site had a history of being damaged in floods. For example, in May 1894 the bridge of the time was washed away in a heavy flood, and until the next bridge was opened in March 1896, travellers and drovers - with their various charges - were obliged to ford the stream. This annoyed the settlers, those driving sheep, and doubtless it was also a struggle for the livestock.³

In September 1912, the Feilding Borough Council wrote to the Oroua County Council seeking permission to lay a water pipe from the water main across Kimbolton Road, to Mr E. (Ernest?) Short's property near Hitchman's Corner.⁴ Although not researched further at this time, this appears likely to have been relevant to the future installation of the trough.

¹ *Feilding Star*, 29 October 1900, p. 2. The Manawatu District Council cemetery records indicated that Maria ("Mary") Hitchman died on 12 February 1921, aged 91, while George Hitchman died on 6 June 1935, aged 95.

² *Feilding Star*, 7 June 1902, p. 2

³ *Feilding Star*, 26 March 1896, p. 2

⁴ *Feilding Star*, 7 September 1912, p. 4

In March 1914, a letter from Mr W.O. Caldwell was submitted to the Oroua County Council, asking if the Council would erect drinking troughs – one at Hitchman’s Corner, and another at the cross of Spur and Taonui Roads. However, the chairman of the County Council thought that as Hitchman’s Corner was so close to the Kiwitea Stream, that a trough was not necessary there. He thought that the Forlong’s Road corner was more suitable. More information was considered necessary in relation to the Spur Road site. Caldwell then submitted another letter to the County Council’s April meeting re the troughs, but the outcome is not known – other than that evidently no trough then appeared at Hitchman’s Corner.⁵

Further light is shed on the Hitchman’s Corner issue through an article published in the *Feilding Star* of 10 September 1920. Entitled ‘Old Feilding: Birth and Growth of the Town, Addresses by Old Residents’, early settler Mr W.G. Haybittle commented that he had been involved with counting the number of houses in the proposed Feilding Borough Council’s area. Two-hundred houses were needed in order that the district could be declared a borough. So in order that they could get enough houses, they had to extend some of the boundaries of the future borough, including up to Mr Hitchman’s property on Kimbolton Road.⁶ This seems likely, in turn, to be why the Feilding Borough Council’s aforementioned water main might have ended up in the vicinity of Hitchman’s Corner.

Installation of the Trough

Newspaper reports from the Feilding area throughout 1939 possibly point to the reason why the installation of a large roadside trough might have become more important then, than in previous years. For example, the *NZ Herald* of 6 March 1939 (p. 9) recorded that a drought was affecting all the North Island hydro-electric power stations. A shortage of electricity was not expected – however, the Mangahao dam (at Shannon) was the most affected. In addition, the prolonged dry spell in the Manawatu and Feilding districts was also “*influencing*” the output of butter from several dairy factories, with the one at Cheltenham (“*one of the largest factories in the North Island*”) being down by a ton of butter per day on the same time in 1938 and down two tons on the same time in 1937. The article concluded by stating that “*An acute shortage of water is being experienced on most (Manawatu) farms, and those engaged in dairying are facing a serious problem with cows drying off through absence of suitable pasture.*”⁷ Two months later, a report on the Feilding stock sale held on 5 May 1939, recorded that it had not gone terribly well. Especially telling was the comment that: “*Most of the cattle yarded showed the effect of the food shortage resulting from the drought.*”⁸

With this dilemma in the minds of the farming and stock-handling community, it seems unsurprising that the first published reference to this trough located during this study, appeared in the *Manawatu Standard* of 19 May 1939. This is a report on a meeting of the Feilding branch of the Farmers’ Union, which had been held the same morning. This states that the chairman, Mr H.D. Richardson, had interviewed the Women’s Division of the Farmers’ Union (W.D.F.U.) “*regarding a pioneers’ memorial to be erected at Hitchman’s Corner, on Kimbolton Road. The suggestions were for either a toilet or a water trough. Regarding the water trough proposal, it was stated that large numbers of livestock passed the corner and the supply would prove of great value.*”

⁵ *Feilding Star*, 7 March 1914, p. 4, 4 April 1914, p. 4

⁶ *Feilding Star*, 10 September 1920, p. 1

⁷ *NZ Herald*, 6 March 1939, p. 9. (The *Press* of 13 January 1939, p. 11, reported that there was also a particularly severe drought underway in Victoria, Australia, that summer as well)

⁸ *Evening Post*, 6 May 1939, p. 13 (Note that the local Feilding newspapers and other records were not accessed on this matter, and so they are likely to have a more detailed coverage than the [online] *Evening Post* does)

The Farmers' Union meeting decided to approach the Feilding Borough Council regarding the supply of water, either for free or at a minimal rate. One committee member pointed out that *"there was a movement afoot whereby local bodies were being asked to supply drinking troughs and accommodation paddocks for stock being driven on country roads."* The suggestion was that the trough be placed *"on the bend of the road opposite the old Hitchman homestead."*

The committee then discussed the proposed methods of raising money for the trough, while noting that various organisations around the district would possibly wish to contribute. It was understood, however, that the Women's Division did not wish to have the proposal become a 'public' one with subscriptions involved, but rather that it be the effort of their group and also the Farmers' Union.

Thereafter followed discussion on the construction requirements of the trough itself: *"A trough half a chain long was required, and it was decided that the trough measure 21ft by 2½ft by 1½ft, with a fairly large concrete base. Mr Younger pointed out that the trough should be placed a little higher up than the corner, as traffic might be interrupted were a mob of 1,000 sheep to be watered. The matter was not discussed further, it being the intention to submit particulars regarding costs, etc., to the W.D.F.U., which sponsored the scheme."*⁹

Lack of rain continued to be a problem later in the year also, for example, the *Evening Post* of 11 November 1939 (p. 14) reported that: *"The continued absence of rain had a detrimental effect on the cattle market of the Feilding sale held (the previous day), the bulk of the heavy yarding of nearly 6,000 head failing to find buyers."*

Amidst the ongoing weather-related problems (and doubtless with war issues also a new concern), the memorial trough was officially unveiled on Wednesday, 20th December 1939. The following is the report of the event published in the *Manawatu Standard* the next day:

Tribute To Pioneers: Hitchman's Corner Memorial: Notable Ceremony

"In the presence of a representative gathering, Hitchman's Corner Pioneers' Memorial, in the form of a drinking trough for stock, was officially unveiled yesterday afternoon. Mr H.D. Richardson, president of the Feilding branch of the Farmers' Union, presided, and apologised for the absence of the chairman of the Oroua County Council (Mr A. Campbell) and the chairman of the KIWITEA County Council (Mr L.T. McLean). Mr E.H. Gordon, member for Rangitikei, was represented by Hon. J.G. Cobbe, member for Manawatu.

"Mr Richardson regretted that Mr and Mrs W. Hitchman, of Dannevirke, were unable to be present. He referred to the hospitality accorded wayfarers by the late Mr and Mrs Hitchman, whose home had been a landmark and had recently been demolished. In the early days the pioneers had not enjoyed the transport facilities so familiar today, and the road was long and weary. Few journeying along Kimbolton Road failed to call in at Mr and Mrs Hitchman's open house for refreshments.

"Today, continued the speaker, the trough had been erected to commemorate those pioneers and to mark Hitchman's Corner. In the early days there were plenty of watering places on the road for livestock, but with the road improvements carried out over a period of years these had disappeared, and the building of a new bridge over the KIWITEA Stream had taken away another drinking spot for stock. Thanks to the Women's' Division of the Farmers' Union the new trough had been erected, and much of the credit was due to that organisation for sponsoring the project, which would serve a very useful purpose.

⁹ *Manawatu Standard*, 19 May 1939, p. 5(6)

“Mr Richardson stated that he had knowledge of one pioneer who used to tramp 15 miles through bush and cattle tracks to get provisions. The present generation had little conception of the privation and hardships suffered by those settlers whose memory the gathering was commemorating. He then called on Mrs Beatson, president of the Women’s’ Division, to turn on the water.

“Mrs Beatson recalled that her father had been the first chairman of the Kiwitea Road Board and the first district representative on the Palmerston North Hospital Board. On behalf of the W.D.F.U. she thanked all who had contributed to the cost of the memorial and especially the Feilding Borough Council for supplying free for all time the water for the trough as part of that body’s Centennial effort.

“Mrs Beatson was presented with a posy of flowers by the little daughter of Mr and Mrs P. Maegaard, of the firm of contractors responsible for building the trough.

“Different Customs: *Cr. W.W. Andrews, representing the Feilding Borough Council, conveyed an apology for absence from the Mayor (Mr T.L. Seddon) and thanked the promoters for the invitation to be present. The memorial was one which would be widely appreciated by those travelling along the road with stock. The speaker could not help visualising how much a similar function would have meant to the early pioneers. They would in all probability have made a day of the proceedings and would have been preoccupied days before in making preparations. Today we rushed about in motor-cars, rushed through the ceremony, and were not happy, unlike the pioneers who were ever ready to help each other and lived in peace, love and harmony.*

“A Fine District: *Mr Cobbe congratulated the Women’s’ Division on sponsoring the effort and thanked those responsible for the fine structure, which would be most useful in addition to commemorating the old, stout-hearted pioneers who went back in the bush over muddy tracks to fell the forest and to provide the wonderful district which their children had inherited. The Feilding district was one of the finest in New Zealand, and the speaker commended the pioneers for their work and fortitude in raising the land to such a standard in fertility and beauty. The pioneers of the district were well-known to the speaker, who had done business with most of them in the early days, and found them honest, independent, and trustworthy. They would not want their names inscribed on a piece of marble and would rather their memory be perpetuated in something of lasting value and service. The speaker was pleased that a useful edifice had been erected in the memory of the historic corner and to the pioneers of the district, to whom so much was owed for the progress made.*

“On behalf of the Oroua County Council, Cr. T. Green ventured the opinion that there were many more costly memorials erected in New Zealand, but few as useful and none better. The request for assistance received by the council had been so reasonable and objective so desirable that the council could not refuse, and had agreed to spend some of the ratepayers’ money collected for roads and bridge work.

“At the conclusion of the ceremony the gathering proceeded to the home of Mr and Mrs H.E. Hocken, ‘Grassmere’, Colyton, where afternoon tea was served amidst pleasant surroundings.

“Cr. Andrews read the following letter from the Mayor:

“The form of the memorial seems singularly appropriate. The passing traveller will reflect upon the changes time and progress have brought to our way of living, and many will recall the days when such things as this memorial were as important as the bowser is today. Even now there will be many who will praise the thoughtfulness of those responsible for this memorial. We have reached a degree of comfort and luxury undreamt of even fifty years ago. I think we are, however, beginning to realise that, although life is full of things which make for our material benefit, happiness does not always come from them. Rather it is the product of the qualities of enterprise, resourcefulness,

*independence and contentment which those whom we commemorate today found in a life of hard work and service for others. I mean not merely hum-drum existence, but a full and active life, with a vision of the future lit up for them by the light of a simple faith and trust in One Who was their refuge and strength in all dangers and difficulties. At this time we need to become reinvigorated with those qualities, for in them I believe is the cure for many of the moral and economic ailments from which we are suffering at the present time.'*¹⁰

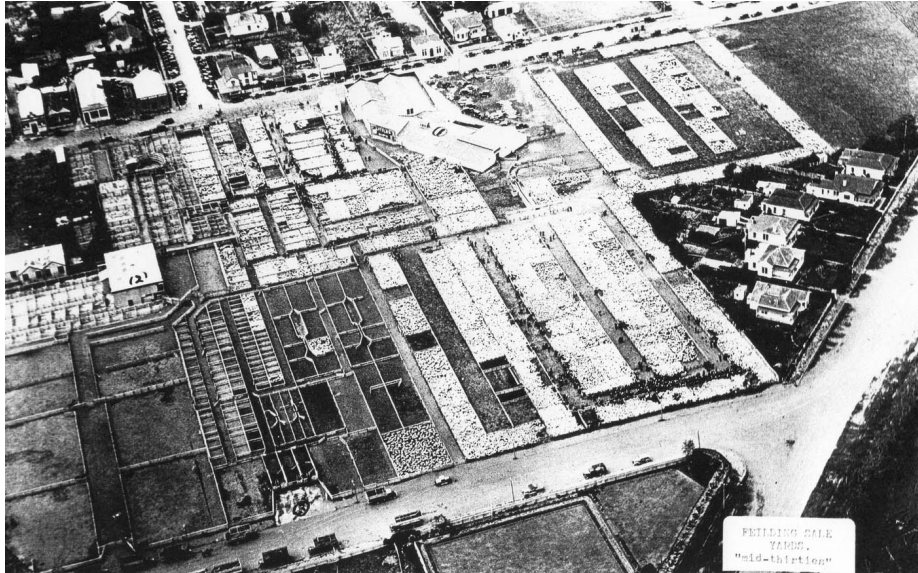


Figure 2 The Feilding Saleyards are shown here in 1937. Hunter (p. 18) states that this was a record yarding consisting of 52,000 sheep, while the *Evening Post* of 22 February 1937 (p. 17) gave the number as approximately 50,000 sheep. Doubtless many of them had been driven along Kimbolton Road to reach the saleyards, and this stock movement provided much of the pressure that resulted in the construction of the trough three years later. Hunter recorded that to accommodate them all, temporary yards were set up in Levin & Co.'s paddocks (shown above right). Unfortunately, once the auction began and people started moving through the pens, the sheep moved to avoid them and ultimately the hurdles collapsed. As a result, sheep went everywhere. They were still being sorted out again the following day. (Feilding Library photo: AGR: me 9)

The Passing Livestock

While focused on the saleyards themselves, Brian Hunter's book *Feilding Saleyards: 125 years of Success, 1880-2005*, provides some useful information on stock-movements that will have seen the trough in use. The saleyards had operated since the latter 1870s, although the outlying towns usually had their own smaller saleyards. However, stock from those other saleyards was also likely to pass by from time to time when heading to new owners, to the freezing works in Feilding, or to or from the railway yards.

Some huge yardings of stock occurred at Feilding, and some figures from shortly before the trough was constructed give good justification as to the need for such a facility. For example, the *Auckland Star* of 5 March 1934 (p. 9) reported that over 100,000 sheep, mostly breeding ewes, had been auctioned at the Feilding saleyards over a three week period during February of that year. Some 40,000 ewes were at the 1936 ewe fair, followed by 36,000 in 1936 and then a new record of around 50,000 were at the 1937 ewe fair.¹¹ An aerial photo of the yards filled for the 1937 sale is published with this report. The *Evening Post* of 18 February 1939 (p. 13) and 19 February 1940 (p. 10) then gave figures of around 44,000 and 39,000 respectively.

¹⁰ *Manawatu Standard*, 21 December 1939 p. 4(4)

¹¹ *Evening Post*, 22 February 1937, p. 17

Brian Hunter's book also describes some of the droving activities that will have involved this trough. He records the memories of Alby Burney who drove stock around the region for almost fifty years, until the sheep trucks took over the work of the drovers. Burney described how with a number of drovers trying to get their stock in for sale day, there would be a "certain urgency on sale morning as the animals got near Feilding. 'If we didn't get to the Kiwitea Bridge in Kimbolton Road by midday then we wouldn't be allowed to go over (the bridge) until one o'clock.' Alby says that both drovers and dogs would be listening for the siren that marked the end of lunchbreak at Borthwicks' Freezing Works to come echoing over the paddocks so they could get on their way. Then it would be down Kimbolton Road and along East Street making sure that the suburban gardens lining the streets didn't suffer from any of the drover's charges deciding to sample the tempting greenery on the way."¹²

A specific incident that Alby Burney recalled was about one particular big cattle fair where eight mobs of cattle were left waiting to cross the Kiwitea Bridge at one o'clock.¹³ The trough would have been well-used that day.

Aaron Smale, in his article 'Saleyards' in *The New Zealand Geographic* of Nov-Dec 2006, wrote of an undated ewe fair at Feilding where there were 50,000 sheep stretched over a 5km stretch of Kimbolton Road north of Feilding. The trough would have been most useful then too.



Figure 3 The trough with its concrete foot pad in the foreground. The rail along the length of the trough was to reduce the temptation of livestock to jump into or over the trough, and also to make it easier for stock to drink from both sides of the trough without interfering with each other. Looking in the direction of Cheltenham and the Colyton Road intersection - 27 November 2016

The Decline in Usage

Ruth Entwistle Low's book *On the Hoof: The untold story of drovers in New Zealand*, gives some information relevant to the declining use of the trough. She recorded that census data on drovers showed that their numbers (nation-wide) reduced from 976 in 1936, to 447 in 1945 and then down to

¹² Hunter, p. 45

¹³ Hunter, p. 45

187 in 1951.¹⁴ This corresponded with the development of increasingly reliable, more powerful and larger stock trucks. However, whereas it was easier for these trucks to carry a fairly large number of sheep, they could carry only relatively few cattle. So the cattle continued walking.¹⁵

Hunter (p. 35) refers to loading ramps being installed at the Feilding saleyards in the mid-1960s. This also removed the need for saleyards in the various small towns, and soon Feilding's alone remained locally.¹⁶

While it was not apparent during this study just when the last mob of sheep or cattle might have made use of the trough, clearly the numbers will have declined radically from the mid-1960s. However, Low (p. 112) interviewed a drover named Arthur McRae for her book, and he spoke of undertaking regular six-week-long treks with 500-600 head of cattle from the 1970s and into the 1990s. These began at Gisborne, passed through Hawkes Bay, over the Saddle Road to Ashhurst, then up to Colyton, and then (after passing the trough) into Feilding. From there they would proceed onto their destination near Hunterville – possibly via Halcombe.

Conclusion

This trough was born of the need to water stock after the Kiwitea Stream became less accessible to the passing mobs of sheep and cattle – and also because the stock might become stalled there for an hour or so to await permission to cross the Kiwitea Bridge. It was also born of both a significant regional drought and the district's will to have something to mark the early pioneers of the area during the Centennial year (i.e. 1940). It is telling that there was evidently already a water main from Feilding to the site by around 1912, and also that the Feilding Borough Council – and therefore presumably its successor – had agreed to supply the water to it *“free for all time...as part of that body's Centennial effort.”*¹⁷

Feilding has a number of features representing the days of the drover – with the beautiful 'Drover & Dog' statue being a most significant one. However, this mostly overlooked old trough is likely to be the only true 'designated memorial' of those times that also actually serviced the industry - and in such a practical way.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The water trough was constructed of concrete and is 21ft by 2½ft by 1½ft. A length of railway steel is fixed above the trough. The trough is located some distance from the road in a large, flat, grassy berm adjacent to neighbouring farmland.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2016 for this memorial is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The water trough has **moderate** to **high local** significance for **historic people** and **pattern** values as well as **rarity** heritage values.

¹⁴ Ruth Entwistle Low, *On the Hoof: The untold story of drovers in New Zealand* (Auckland, 2014), p. 229

¹⁵ Low, p. 226-7

¹⁶ Aaron Smale, 'Saleyards' in *New Zealand Geographic*, Nov-Dec 2006:

<https://www.nzgeo.com/stories/saleyards/>

¹⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 21 December 1939 p. 4(4)

The trough has **high historic** values as a memorial to early pioneers, particularly the Hitchmans who lived opposite, and who offered hospitality to bushmen, drovers and others making their way to Feilding. They were seen as epitomising the values of a rural bygone past. It has **high historic** values in its association with droving of stock, demonstrating a significant agricultural activity in the region up until the 1990s. Stock were driven to and from the Feilding stockyards, at one time the largest in the North Island. Its location has **moderate historic** significance as a place for stock to congregate before being allowed to cross the Kiwitea Bridge to the stockyards. The trough has **moderate rarity** values as one of few such objects surviving in the region.

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Thanks also to Peter Olsen of Colyton, for some invaluable guidance on the story of the trough.

HITCHING RAIL – Road Reserve, Outside 57 Willoughby Street, Halcombe



Architect: -

Construction date: 1914

Visible materials: Timber

Architectural style: -

Use/building type: Hitching rail

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman 2014, Val Burr 2019

Heritage New Zealand listing:

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

This hitching rail stands outside the front door of the former Halcombe Post Office, and while the Post Office has a Category 2 listing with Heritage New Zealand, there is no indication on the information sighted that the hitching rail has been included under the Post Office's listing.¹ The two have been listed separately in Manawatu District Council's Operative District Plan.

The new Halcombe Post Office was officially opened on 20 January 1914, and the hitching rail was erected ten months later. Accordingly, on 13 October 1914, Marton's *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus* (p. 2) published a report from its Halcombe correspondent, which stated that: "The only new public work done here during the past week that I have noticed is the erection of "hitching posts" in front of the Post Office. These must be intended for motor cars, as the horses we see about in these degenerate days are mostly tied up."

¹ Halcombe Post Office, List No. 1197 (entered with HNZ in 1982): <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1197>



Figure 1 This is the earliest photo traced for this study that shows the hitching rail – which was installed in October 1914, thereby giving an earliest possible date. A noteworthy feature is that there appears to be a metal strap over the middle post in this photo. Such a strap would have served to (hopefully) hold the top rail in place when a misbehaving or startled horse pulled back on it. The other two posts are obscured. (Source: Mandahl Collection, Manawatu District Library <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/17871>)

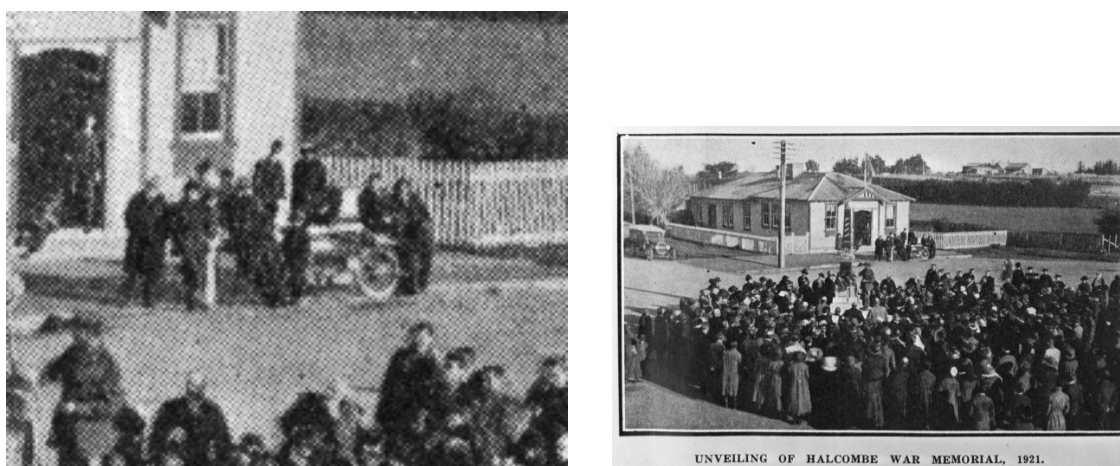


Figure 2 The white-painted hitching rail cropped from a photo of the unveiling of the Halcombe War Memorial on 27 July 1921. Unfortunately the hitching rail was serving as a seat at the time, and so it is largely obscured. However, the man at the left end of the hitching rail is clearly leaning on the protruding part of the rail. (Source: Manawatu District Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/assets/display/17749-max>)

Hitching posts and hitching rails do not usually make the news, however, this one certainly made the news at least twice in its early years. Its second known appearance came on 14 August 1920, when the *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus* (p. 4) published the following report from its Halcombe correspondent: “One of those strange accidents which seem peculiar to boys, happened to one of Mr Douglas Anderson’s boys the other day. Nelson was returning from school when he somehow managed to get mixed up with a hook on the hitching rail in front of the Post Office, the result being a very badly lacerated hand. The sufferer had to be taken to Feilding, where he had to bear with fortitude the delicate attentions of the surgeon, who inserted about a dozen stitches.”

The injured boy was Nelson James Marcus Anderson, son of local butcher James Douglas Anderson and his wife Kate Caroline Hughes Anderson, who was born on 12 November 1908. In due course he married Lynda Evelyn Managh on 4 July 1934, and he eventually died on 17 August 1977. The couple are buried together at Halcombe Cemetery. Lynda Managh’s mother, Amelia, had what is now the Halcombe Memorial Hall built in 1935.²

² Births, Death & Marriages online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> (Refs: 1908/22763; 1934/9734; 1977/44372); Manawatu District Council: http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Online_Services/Find_It/Cemetery_Search ‘Anderson, Nelson James

Evidently this location - not too far from the railway lines - was not the best place to tie a rural horse, and although perhaps Nelson Anderson's mishap may well have been the only one this hitching rail ever suffered, the hitching post across the road was not so lucky. In December 1919, Miss Elliott of 'Woodlawn,' tied her horse and trap to the hitching post in front of Mr J. Fleming's shop. Unfortunately a passing train frightened the horse, which broke the post, and so the horse, complete with its trap, and the hitching post bouncing around its feet, headed toward Stanway. Fortunately all was soon sorted without too much damage being done – other than to the snapped off hitching post.³

Hitching Rail Design

Heritage New Zealand has three listed horse-hitching 'facilities', all having Category 2 listings. These are the Canterbury Club hitching post in Christchurch⁴; the hitching 'post' in the Square⁵, Palmerston North, and the hitching rail in Raetihi.⁶ Of these, the Christchurch one has lost its hitching ring; the Palmerston North one has lost its two matching posts and its rail (it is part of a hitching rail, and thus technically not a 'hitching post'), however, it still has the last of its three hitching rings; meanwhile the Raetihi one has had one of its two totara posts repaired twice (variously due to rot and being hit by a car), but it still has its two hitching rings.

Manawatu District Council has one other heritage hitching 'facility' on its heritage list – this being the hitching post that stands outside the Feilding Club's premises at 25 Kimbolton Road.⁷

The Halcombe hitching rail, the Raetihi hitching rail and the portion of a hitching rail in the Square, Palmerston North, differ in design as much as they differ in their states of preservation. The Halcombe hitching rail appears to have had hitching hooks protruding from each of the three posts – although perhaps these were changed to the safer hitching rings alone after young Nelson Anderson's nasty accident on one of them in 1920. As they are not clearly visible in the early photos, presumably they were on the side closest to the post office. The hooks also had the potential to injure the horses or to snag on their bridles (with potentially dire results) if they rubbed against them. The three posts appear sound after 104 years, although the two lengths of timber that serve as the top rail, could be replacements or could have otherwise been altered. One early photo of the rail when painted white, appears to have 'something' attached to the middle post. This might have been a metal strap across the top of the rail to hold it in place atop the posts – however, these possible straps are not present in later photos.

The Raetihi hitching rail is a simple one with two posts, a rail, and two hitching rings. The Palmerston North 'post' was once the end post of one of a number of similar hitching rail sets that stood around the Square in the early 1900s. Both the Raetihi and Palmerston North rails had the rails mortised into them, whereas the Halcombe one has its rail perched on top of the three posts.

The records of the Halcombe Post Office available at Archives New Zealand, may provide additional information on the history of this hitching rail, and on the decision to construct it. For example, the search words 'Hitching Post' bring up two entries for the Halcombe Post Office – both being for photographs and dated 1967 and 1970, however the 1970 date refers to when the original c1920s photo was copied. The only other entry under 'Hitching Post' is for the Hikurangi Post Office, which

Marcus'; and 'Charles Managh + Amelia Henrietta Schwass, Halcombe': <http://www.familytreecircles.com/charles-managh-amelia-henrietta-schwass-halcombe-68773.html>

³ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 16 December 1919, p. 5

⁴ Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1839>

⁵ Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1259>

⁶ Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/964>

⁷ 'Hitching Post – outside 25 Kimbolton Road, Feilding', Draft heritage report for Manawatu District Council, 2017 (compiled by Val Burr & Ian Bowman)

proves to be the same age as Halcombe's former Post Office, and almost identical to it – but which no longer has its hitching rail.⁸

The Last Hitching Rails

While this aspect is not covered in depth here, the Papers Past website includes a few later references to hitching rails that had seemingly outlived their era. For example, the *Poverty Bay Herald* of 5 November 1928 (p. 12), in reporting the news from Te Araroa, stated that the Matakaoa County Council had passed a resolution banning the hitching of horses anywhere in the township other than at the authorised hitching rails. Evidently the Maori customers of the Waipu Farmers' Co-operative Co. had been hitching their riding horses and pack horses to the fence near the store – and so the local ranger had begun attempting to seize the horses to take them to the pound (nine miles away) while the owners were shopping in the store. Despite attempts by the store to be allowed to install their own hitching rail near their premises, the County Council refused to allow it as it would be contrary to the county's new by-law.

The *Auckland Star* of 5 September 1930 (p. 6) recorded how with the advent of the car, hitching posts had almost entirely disappeared. However, in some country districts, some had survived. For example, at Howick the hitching rail outside the post office had been removed during roading operations. However, as the district's farmers still used it, the local Town Board had decided to re-erect it.

The *Waihi Daily Telegraph* of 5 November 1936 (p. 2) gave a light-hearted view of their town's post office hitching rail: *"We boast of a genuine antique in our town area—the hitching rail for horses outside the post office. Quite recently we actually saw a real horse hitched thereto, and were justifiably astonished. But it was the Old 'Un's Daisy, and there is nothing really remarkable in finding it outside the post office. We find it in the vegetable garden every other morning. But it was the first horse we have seen hitched outside the post office for how many years? The days of the horse in Waihi have long since passed. It has been superseded by the bicycle first, and then by the airflow Terraplane..."*

The *Poverty Bay Herald* also reported on the views of the use of hitching rails in Ruatoria in their edition of 2 December 1938 (p. 6). The Waiapu County Council's health inspector had made a suggestion in his report that the hitching of horses not be permitted in the business part of town, as, especially in the summer months, the hitching of horses in the business area was not in the best interests of health. He noted that many of the horses seemed to be left tied up there for considerable periods of time. Two months later, the Waiapu County Council's engineer was instructed to have a hitching rail for horses installed at the northern end of town, and signs were to be erected prohibiting the tethering of horses in any other part of town.⁹

Clearly what had once been acceptable in fairly remote rural communities in terms of horse 'parking' activities, was increasingly less tolerated as the reliance on horse transport declined. For example, the *Stratford Evening Press* of 14 September 1933 (p. 4) referred to the decline of hitching posts in Christchurch. While the identified ones included the Canterbury Club's aforementioned hitching post that still survives, it also referred to the Christchurch Public Library's hitching rail in Cambridge Terrace. This hitching rail *"is still standing, though in close proximity are its successors – a bicycle stand and a car-parking area defined by painted lines on the roadway."*

While there is no obvious reason as to why the Halcombe hitching rail survives, whereas so many others do not, possibly the residents of outlying areas like Tokorangi and Stanway were still riding their horses into town to visit their local post office; and after the horses dropped away, the hitching

⁸ Archives New Zealand: <https://archway.archives.govt.nz/> [Search: 'Halcombe Post Office' and 'Hitching Post'] See RB4 Former Halcombe Post Office report re the Hikurangi Post Office references

⁹ *Poverty Bay Herald*, 27 February 1939, p. 2

rail doubtlessly continued to serve as a very sturdy bicycle rack. The timing of the removal of the hitching hooks and rings is unknown, however, the hole drilled in one of the rails (perhaps to allow a wire loop to be installed) might have allowed an alternative hitching point for people still wishing to occasionally tie up their horses or dogs when they visited the post office.

The Archway website¹⁰ lists the 'Halcombe Post Office' with the dates 1876-1987, while the corresponding entry for 'New Zealand Post Limited, Halcombe' has the dates 1987-1988.¹¹ On Friday, 5th February 1988, 432 post offices around the country closed down, and these included the Halcombe Post Office.¹² The former Halcombe Post Office's Certificates of Title WN37C/132 and WN48B/758 indicate that the building was subsequently sold into private ownership in 1996. Thus the hitching rail has survived all this disruption as well ravages of time.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The post has **low to high national** significance for **representivity, rarity, group, authenticity, people, pattern** and **educational** heritage values.

The rail has **moderate representivity** values as an example of a once common means of tying up horses for short periods. Its design has **high rarity** values as one of only three known rails still extant.

The rail has **low group** values as one of few such structures in the country.

The rail has **moderate to high authenticity** with only the hitching rings having been removed.

The rail has **high associative** values with the Halcombe Post Office constructed nine months prior to the construction of the hitching rail.

The rail has **high pattern** and **educative** values reflecting the common use of horses as transport from the earliest days of settlement throughout New Zealand and the need for them to be tied up for short periods when in commercial areas. The removal of the rails also demonstrates the decline in use of horses, at first in the larger cities but with smaller rural towns maintaining their use longer. Motorised vehicles saw their demise with very few surviving throughout the country.

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Google Street View <https://www.google.co.nz/maps/> [as per footnotes & captions]

Heritage New Zealand: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/> [as per footnotes, text & captions]

¹⁰ Archives New Zealand: <https://archway.archives.govt.nz/> (Search 'Halcombe Post')

¹¹ Te Papa website: February 1988: <http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2012/02/29/february-1988-this-month-last-century/>

¹² *Manawatu Standard*, 16 October 1987, p. 1; and 5 February 1988, p. 10

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Manawatu District Council: Certificates of Title for 57 Willoughby Street, Halcombe (former post office building)

Modern images by: Rochelle Waugh and Val Burr

IMAGES



Figure 3 The hitching rail with a colour change, after both the building and rail have been painted. The building is known to have been painted in 1923.¹ There is no sign of the hitching hooks on this side of the structure. There is also no sign of a metal strap to hold the rail in place in this photo. (Source: Archives NZ, Wellington. Ref: R24136477 AAME 8106 W5603 276/1/H/24)



Figure 4 The hitching rail in about 1967. (Source: Archives NZ, Wellington. Ref: R24136464 AAME 8106 W5603 276/1/H/18)



Figure 5 The hitching rail in February 2008, some twenty years after the closure of the post office. (Google Street View)



Figure 6 Probably the marks near the tops of the three posts, show where the hitching hooks once protruded. It is not apparent as to when they were removed – or possibly sawn off. (Photo: Rochelle Waugh, 26 September 2018)



Figure 7 Note the hole through the rail in the middle of the closest span. Presumably the brackets beneath the windows of the post office, were also used as bicycle racks. (Photo: Rochelle Waugh, 26 September 2018)



Figure 8 Both sides of the eastern-most post. The photo with the 'interestingly located' rust stain shows the side closest to the road, while the other is the side closest to the post office – where the actual hitching hook would have been located. The hitching hooks appear to have been sawn off, rather than removed entirely. (Photo: Rochelle Waugh, 26 September 2018)



Figure 9 Both sides of the middle post – which shows a few interesting marks, causes of which may have included a metal strap over the top – as appears to have been present in the oldest known photo of the hitching rail. Whether or not both halves of the top rail are the originals, is not certain. (Photo: Rochelle Waugh, 26 September 2018)



Figure 10 The hole in the rail – the purpose of which is unclear. The brown paint that was used for most of the life of the top rail, can be seen where the white paint has peeled back. (Photo: Rochelle Waugh, 26 September 2018)



Figure 11 The rail (Photo: Rochelle Waugh, 26 September 2018)

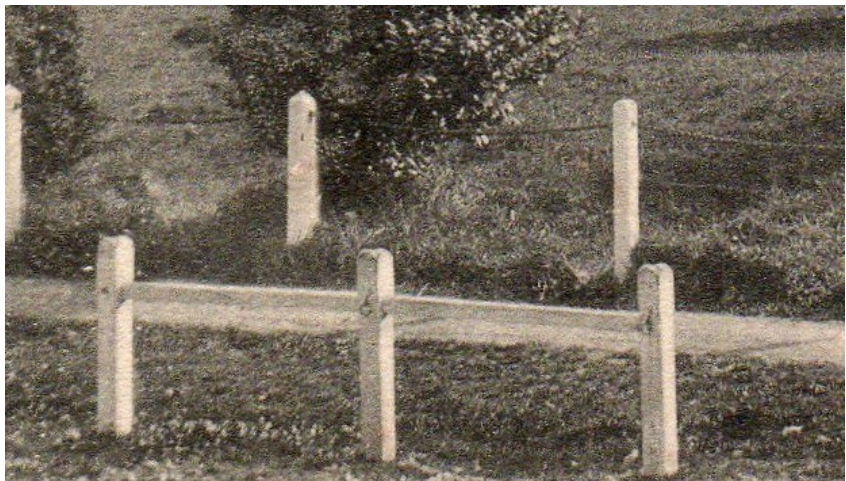


Figure 12 This (right) is one of the sets of hitching rails that once stood in the Square, Palmerston North. This particular rail was near the present Plaza. A single post from one of these sets survives in the Square (pictured at left - opposite Fitzherbert Ave.), complete with its ring. It is the equivalent of the post on the left of this set of three. This post has a Category Two listing with Heritage New Zealand. (Source: Val Burr's postcard collection, and also photo taken 30 January 2017)



Figure 13 Raetihi Hitching Rail – Feb 2010. The hitching rings can just be seen on the rail in this photo. This hitching rail has a Category Two listing with Heritage New Zealand. (Google Street View)

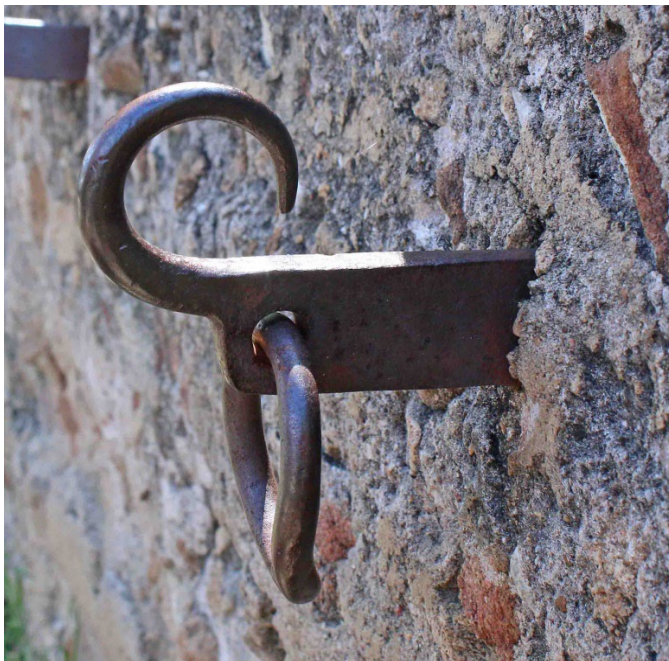


Figure 14 This is an example of a hitching hook as described as being on the Halcombe hitching rail at the time of Nelson Anderson's accident in 1919. This one is embedded in concrete at Timothy Molony Park, Ipswich, Queensland. (Cropped from a photo taken in 2018, that is listed on: <https://www.ipswichfirst.com.au/five-things-you-probably-didnt-know-were-included-in-the-ipswich-heritage-program/hitching-rail-timothy-molony-park/>)

HITCHING POST – Outside 25 Kimbolton Road, Feilding



Architect: -

Construction date: 1904 - 1905

Visible materials: Timber

Architectural style: -

Use/building type: Hitching post

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2017; Val Burr 2017

Heritage New Zealand listing: 2

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

When the Feilding Club was added to the NZ Historic Places Trust's Register on 30 June 2006, not only the Club's 109-year-old building listed, but so also was an old totara hitching post that had for many years stood in front of the Club on its Kimbolton Road frontage. It seems almost certain that this was one of two hitching posts that the Feilding Club requested permission from the Feilding Borough Council to install in December 1904. By 1980, only one of the two hitching posts survived. Google Street View imagery then reveals that this remaining one disappeared from its position between August 2013 and May 2015, however it has now been reinstated on the footpath outside the Feilding Club.

Background

The Feilding Club was established as a 'gentlemen's club' in 1888, with its clubrooms being completed on the present site in early 1897.¹ Feilding was (and remains) a rural service town and also had its own very busy stock sales operation – and thus the Club's membership included many who were likely to travel by horseback, and/or aboard horsedrawn vehicles. The horses involved in both modes of transport, therefore, required tying up while their riders or drivers were visiting the Club – although long-term visits were more likely to have seen the horses taken to the comfort of a nearby livery stable for the duration.

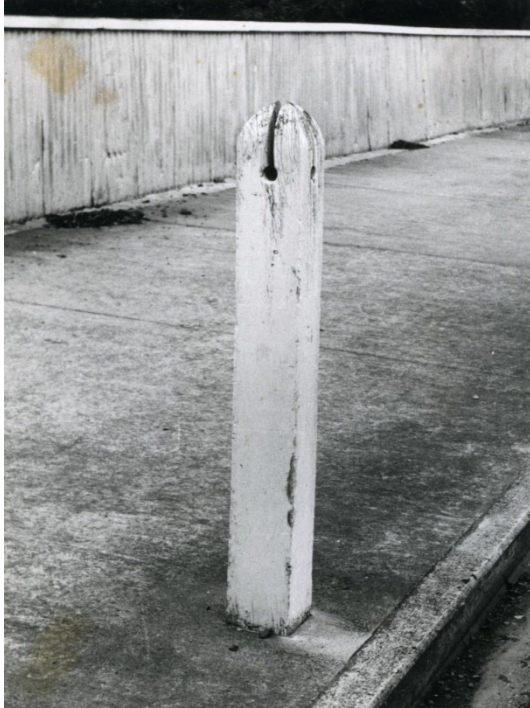


Figure 1 This photo of the hitching post outside 25 Kimbolton Road, was taken by Philip Whyte (presumably) in 1980, at the time of his study. He considered it worthy of proposing for a Category I listing due to its historic significance.¹



Figure 2 The hitching post outside 25 Kimbolton Road (the Feilding Club) on 12 December 2005. (Photo: Val Burr)

The records of the Feilding Borough Council include applications from businesses for permission to install hitching posts in front of their various premises. Relevant here is a letter dated 29 November 1904 addressed to the Feilding Borough Council. This states: *"Gentlemen, I have been instructed by the committee of the Feilding Club to ask your permission to erect two hitching posts facing or near the gate entrance to our Club on the Kimbolton Road. (Signed) E.G. Manning, Secretary, Feilding Club."*²

The letter was duly presented at the Feilding Borough Council's fortnightly meeting held on 1 December 1904. The following day the *Feilding Star* reported the matter accordingly in the course of outlining the letters the council had received: *"E.G. Manning, Secretary of the Feilding Club, asking permission to erect two hitching posts in front of Club premises in Kimbolton Road. – Permission granted."*³

¹ Heritage NZ (formerly NZHPT): Feilding Club & Hitching Post: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/7667>

² 'Feilding Borough Council Licences – Hitching Posts, Nov. 1882-July 1907', Ref. MDC 00001 : 5 : 4 (Archives Central, Feilding)

³ *Feilding Star*, 2 December 1904, p. 2

While it is not certain that this is one of the two hitching posts installed in 1904-05 (it may have been replaced at some stage), it is reasonably likely that it is. Probably only a very detailed study of the Feilding Club's records would confirm this one way or the other.

It may also be assumed that the two hitching posts were installed soon after permission to do so was granted, and possibly the records of the Feilding Club will also provide the background to the need to install them at that time. These records might also indicate who made them. While no photos were sighted during this study that showed the two Feilding Club hitching posts in the early days, others visible in old photos from around Feilding seem to show those hitching posts to be of the more common design where a metal ring has been hammered into a simple (but sturdy) white post.



Figure 3 These are screenshots of two Google Street View images. The one on the **left**, from August 2013, shows the well-painted hitching post in its historic spot – close to where the front bumper would be for any vehicle parking in the closest space. The image on the **right** was taken in May 2015 – and it showed that the white mark on the footpath was all that was left of the hitching post at that time.

Modern Times

While it is not known how often horses were tied to the post in more recent decades, the wife of a Feilding Club member spoke of tying her pony to it when she was a child.⁴

In 1980, Philip Whyte undertook a brief study entitled 'Hitching Facilities' as part of a *"Proposed Register of objects and places of historic interest of natural beauty"* in the Feilding Borough. He wrote that: *"The hitching facilities are a reminder of times before motor-cars. They are in good condition, except those at 104 Manchester Street."* The hitching posts he identified were *"those"* at 104 Manchester Street, the one at 25 Kimbolton Road, and two attached to the Darragh's shopping centre building. He considered them worthy of proposing for Category I status, based on their historical significance. The two in front of the Darragh building were hitching rings and hooks that had been hammered into building's verandah posts. That building was destroyed by fire in December 1995.⁵ Similarly, there are no longer any hitching posts outside 104 Manchester Street.⁶

On 12 December 2005, during the time the writer (Val Burr) researched the Feilding Club for the NZ Historic Places Trust (as it was named then), I took a few photographs of the hitching post. At that time it clearly had not been painted in a while, and also the top was showing signs of deterioration. These photos now serve to demonstrate the considerable deterioration the hitching post has suffered since that time – albeit that it has been kept well painted since those photos were taken.

⁴ Interview with Rob Garrett, president of the Feilding Club, 1 February 2017

⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 18 September 2008: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/your-manawatu/feilding-herald/633759/Darraghs-marks-120-years>

⁶ The earliest Google Street View image of 104 Manchester Street – that of 2008 - has no hitching post in front of the building.

At some point between August 2013 and May 2015 (the occasions when the Google Street View van passed 25 Kimbolton Road), the hitching post was apparently run into by a vehicle and snapped off at its base. The next day when people arrived at the Feilding Club, they noticed that it had vanished, and thought the worst. Then someone chanced to find it under the shrubbery in the Club's front garden. Whoever had run into it (or perhaps someone who had subsequently found it obstructing the footpath) had presumably just thrown it over the nearest fence. It was then taken inside the Club and stored while club members decide on the next step to be taken with it.⁷

The hitching post has a number of bruises and dents that it did not appear to have in 2005. Being set so close to the curb has placed it on the receiving end of probably more than just the bump that broke it. The Feilding Club have given serious consideration to having a duplicate post made, and from there the decision is just where to install the replica – either on the roadside or on their own property.⁸

Hitching Post Designs



Figure 4 The Canterbury Club's Category 2 (HNZ) hitching post has been dated at 1870-1890, and it has lost its hitching ring at some point. The photo of the post alone was taken in 2004 by NZHPT. The Google Street View screenshot of the post and the club was taken in August 2015.

The Feilding Club's hitching post, in contrast to the more common designs, has had the top of the post rounded off and it has been incised with a deep cross, and it has no metalwork on it at all. This may be a relatively unique design. Certainly it is likelier to have been more gentle on a horse rubbing against it than other types will have been, due to the lack of sharp points. Correspondingly, it might have been harder for a horse to rub its bridle off on this type of post – again due to the lack of sharp points.⁹

The two other wooden hitching posts listed with Heritage NZ, are very different in design to the Feilding one. One, in the Square in Palmerston North¹⁰, has a metal ring, and the other, outside the Canterbury Club in Christchurch¹¹, has a hole where it once had a similar metal ring. In addition, both of these were designed so that rainwater ran off them - instead of into the interior of them as occurs with the Feilding Club's post. The Palmerston North and Christchurch hitching posts have Category 1 and 2 ratings with Heritage NZ respectively.

⁷ Interview with Rob Garrett, president of the Feilding Club, 1 February 2017

⁸ Interview with Rob Garrett, president of the Feilding Club, 1 February 2017

⁹ Personal observation as a former horse-owner - VAB

¹⁰ Heritage NZ: Palmerston North Hitching Post: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1259>

¹¹ Heritage NZ: Canterbury Club Hitching Post: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1839>

The hitching post in Grey Street, Hawera (alongside its intersection with Princes Street), has a near-identical top to the Feilding post, however, that post's sides have been partially angled off as a decorative feature.¹² The Hawera hitching post has (or was being proposed for in 2015) a Category 2 status under the South Taranaki District Council's District Plan¹³, but it is not listed with Heritage NZ.

When conservation architect Chris Cochran compiled his Heritage Inventory of the Hawera Town Centre in 1998, he found no specific history for this hitching post, including its age. However, he described it as being of a hardwood and "with a domed top and stop chamfers to each corner. It has an ingenious system for holding the reins of horses, two slots cut in the top down to horizontal holes drilled through the post." In his Statement of Significance, as well as describing the general history of these posts nowadays, he ended by stating that "Such objects are now very rare; in addition, this particular post is of unusual design and may be unique for this reason."¹⁴ Little is known of the Hawera post, other than that it was installed prior to the First World War.¹⁵ More in-depth research on both posts – initially in the records of the Feilding Club from 1904-5 to find the origin of their two posts – might reveal more on these similar designs.

Auckland's last hitching post stood in Parnell Road, directly opposite Cathedral Place, for over a century (c1903). However, it has recently been removed for preservation, leaving only a concrete patch on the footpath. Of relevance here though is the work that had gone into retaining it as a heritage item – even though its hook and ring were long gone as at 1937.¹⁶ The Auckland City Council had valued this post sufficiently enough to have installed a bronze plaque on it in 1944 to explain its significance.¹⁷ A copper cap was then installed on the top of it in 1966 in a bid to reduce a problem with rot.¹⁸ However, by late 2013 the post had been removed for preservation, and its current situation was not researched further.¹⁹

Procedures: Obtaining Hitching Posts in Feilding

To obtain a hitching post, Feilding businesses had to apply to the Borough Council for permission to erect one. The Feilding Borough Council's file on the topic thus contains letters written to the council between 1882 and 1907, by the various applicants.²⁰ However, the following are some other examples of these requests, as referred to in reports from council meetings published in the *Feilding Star*:

¹² The street address of the building alongside this hitching post is 172 Princes Street, Hawera.

¹³ South Taranaki District Council: Proposed South Taranaki District Plan (August 2015): Ref: H81: Hitching Post, Grey Street, Hawera: https://www.southtaranaki.com/uploaded_files/District-Plan/Proposed%20District%20Plan/Schedule%201%20Heritage%20Sites%20of%20Significance%20to%20Tangata%20Whenua.pdf

¹⁴ Chris Cochran, Hawera Town Centre Heritage Inventory, South Taranaki District Council, June 1998: https://www.southtaranaki.com/uploaded_files/random/heritage/hawera.pdf

¹⁵ *Taranaki Daily News*, 5 November 2012, p. 9

¹⁶ *NZ Herald*, 31 March 1937, p. 15

¹⁷ *NZ Herald*, 6 October 1944, p. 4

¹⁸ 'A Post on a Post in Parnell', on the website 'Timespanner: A journey through Avondale, Auckland and New Zealand history', dated 27 January 2011: <http://timespanner.blogspot.co.nz/2011/01/post-on-post-in-parnell.html>

¹⁹ *East and Bays Courier*, 18 June 2010: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/east-bays-courier/3822811/Parnell-horse-post-at-last-protected> ; Minutes of Parnell Inc. 4 December 2012: <http://parnell.net.nz/wp-content/uploads/MINUTES-Parnell-Inc-04.12.12.pdf> 'Does anyone know what happened to the Parnell horse hitching post?': <https://twitter.com/marcuslush/status/398931465175453696> ; See also re its age: *Auckland Star*, 19 July 1933, p. 6, 20 July 1933, p. 9, 29 July 1933, p. 15

²⁰ 'Feilding Borough Council Licences – Hitching Posts, Nov. 1882-July 1907', Ref. MDC 00001 : 5 : 4 (Archives Central, Feilding)

- November 1885: J.M. Higgins applied for permission to erect a lamp and a hitching post outside his premises in Kimbolton Road.²¹
- September 1887: T. Hirst requested a culvert and hitching post near his butcher's shop, Kimbolton Road.²²
- December 1892: The NZ Clothing Factory requested a hitching post for in front of their premises.²³
- November 1902: Mr Heald and the Postmaster requested permission to erect hitching posts outside the post office.²⁴
- April 1905: Dr Willis seeks permission to erect a hitching post opposite his residence.²⁵
- September 1906: Mr E. Goodbehere should have asked leave to erect a hitching post, as there is already one there.²⁶
- September 1906: Mr E. Goodbehere granted permission "to keep the hitching post erected by him near his residence."²⁷



Figure 5 This hitching post, in Grey Street, Hawera, is very similar to the Feilding Club's one. These photos possibly date to 2015 and are from the Kete New Plymouth website. The street address of the building shown is 172 Princes Street, and it was erected in about 1914 as offices for the timber merchant, George Syme.¹ This hitching post has a Category 2 listing (or was proposed for one in 2015) with the South Taranaki District Council.

Misadventures: Other Issues Involving Feilding's Hitching Posts

Hitching posts contributed to the local news in other ways also:

- September 1887: A man walking fast along Manchester Street collided violently with a hitching post on the corner of the Square. "He was much shaken and somewhat injured. These obstructions ought to be removed and they are dangerous to passengers" (sic).²⁸
- February 1890: "Yesterday afternoon a sedate dray horse was alarmed by a cavalcade of hack horses which passed it, and bolted up Manchester Street. Before it was stopped in its wild career

²¹ *Feilding Star*, 14 November 1885, p. 2

²² *Feilding Star*, 3 September 1887, p. 3

²³ *Feilding Star*, 22 December 1892, p. 2

²⁴ *Feilding Star*, 7 November 1902, p. 2

²⁵ *Feilding Star*, 22 April 1905, p. 2

²⁶ *Feilding Star*, 14 September 1906, p. 4

²⁷ *Feilding Star*, 21 September 1906, p. 4

²⁸ *Feilding Star*, 22 September 1887, p. 2

*it knocked over the hitching posts opposite the (Feilding) Star office. No other damage was done.*²⁹

- May 1891: Mr Bull's trap horse, which was tied up to the hitching post at the railway station, rubbed off its blinkers and bolted. After getting rid of its trap also, it headed across the bridge toward its home.³⁰
- November 1891: A horse attached to a vehicle, and tied up to the hitching post at Mr Carthews', scraped off its bridle and attempted to take off – but was caught.³¹
- August 1892: *"Seeing that there are so many excellent livery stables in Feilding, it appears a shame that horses should be left attached to hitching posts for hours at a time without food or water."* The *Feilding Star* responded to the letter-writer: *"We direct the attention of the constable to this cruel practice."*³²
- October 1896: *"This morning while a horse was left tied up to the hitching post opposite the Bank of Australasia, the nickel silver stirrups were stolen from the saddle by some person."*³³
- July 1893: There was a *"perpetual puddle"* at the hitching post at the railway station.³⁴

The Demise of Hitching Posts

A brief search of the term 'hitching post' on the Papers Past website, gives an idea of the seemingly abrupt demise of hitching posts in New Zealand, upon the arrival of motorcars. In addition, an 1887 article gives some background to them, along with some design tips – although not for the Feilding or Hawera ones. This states that *"The 'hitching-post' is a peculiarly American institution, although it is also called into requisition a good deal in the colonies. The convenience of the hitching-post in front of road-side pubs is often only too well appreciated by the farmer going or coming from market. There they stand, with an 'I'll-hold-your-horse-for-you' air about them that is irresistible to the thirsty wayfarer..."*³⁵

However, things seem to have changed suddenly. Firstly it is noteworthy that the last letter received by the Feilding Borough Council seeking to install a hitching post, was written in 1907.³⁶ Another reference is to 1915, when the Hamilton Borough Council refused a business permission to install a hitching post, and then at the same time also gave another firm 24 hours to remove its hitching post. No reasons were given.³⁷ By 1923, the *Press* was reporting comments on the old hitching post then outside the former Canterbury Provincial Council Chambers – where farmers used to tie their horses in the early days when they came to town to transact business.³⁸ Later in 1923, the *Auckland Star* described a hitching post in Queen Street as being the last of *"scores"* that were once in the street. But that was *"before petrol changed all that."* The article's writer knew of only one other still surviving in a nearby street.³⁹

In 1927, reference was made to the old hitching post in front of the National Hotel in Wellington – including that it was now possibly the only one left in Wellington.⁴⁰ By 1929, an old hitching post dug

²⁹ *Feilding Star*, 18 February 1890, p. 2

³⁰ *Feilding Star*, 7 May 1891, p. 2

³¹ *Feilding Star*, 19 December 1891, p. 2

³² *Feilding Star*, 18 August 1892, p. 2

³³ *Feilding Star*, 20 October 1896, p. 2

³⁴ *Feilding Star*, 20 July 1893, p. 2

³⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 29 October 1887, p. 2

³⁶ 'Feilding Borough Council Licences – Hitching Posts, Nov. 1882-July 1907', Ref. MDC 00001 : 5 : 4 (Archives Central, Feilding)

³⁷ *Waikato Times*, 31 July 1915, p. 4. The one being ordered to be removed was for a farm-related company.

³⁸ *Press*, 18 July 1923, p. 8 (This building was badly damaged in the 2011 earthquake)

³⁹ *Auckland Star*, 6 November 1923, p. 5

⁴⁰ *Evening Post*, 1 August 1927, p. 4

up from several feet underground in Dunedin, was of sufficient historical rarity and importance to warrant an article on Auckland's *NZ Herald*.⁴¹

By 1930, by which time hitching posts had seeming vanished in droves from towns, some still survived in rural areas. For example, when the hitching rail outside the town's post office, had to be removed to allow roadworks to be done, the local Town Board decided to re-erect it as it was still so serviceable to local farmers.⁴² Also in 1930, steps began to save the 'historic hitching post' from in front of the Bank of NZ in Hereford Street, Christchurch. The Canterbury Pilgrims' Association was being asked to safeguard it.⁴³ By 1933, it appears that in the Auckland area only the aforementioned wooden hitching post in Parnell Road was left in situ.⁴⁴ It was to remain there for another 80 years. In 1934, the 'last' hitching post on Lambton Quay was approaching its end – after a truck collided with it. The *Evening Post* further added that these hitching posts had been used by shepherds and others for tethering their horses.⁴⁵

In 1941, Christchurch's *Press* glowingly reported – under the headline *"Hitching Post in use again"*, that four horses had been seen tied to the hitching post opposite the Municipal Buildings in Hastings! *"As far as can be ascertained there are only two hitching-posts in the borough, though a number of rings in verandah posts are still to be seen outside some of the older business premises."*⁴⁶

This evidence indicates that hitching posts quickly vanished from important city streets with the arrival of the earliest cars – even though cars will have still been far out of the reach of many citizens. The tied-up and unattended horses doubtless were terrified of these new vehicles – which would not have made things pleasant when one rattled its way past them. Similarly, having a horse required having somewhere to graze it, and that will also have been harder for residents of cities and towns. However, towns in rural areas still had farmers and their staff who rode their horses to town, and so it is likely that the Feilding Club's hitching post was in use for quite some years after the many hitching posts vanished from inner city streets such as Queen Street, Auckland.

Comments

The Feilding Club's hitching post is evidently Feilding's last surviving 'historic' hitching post, although there may be some in outlying parts of the Manawatu District. For example, Halcombe's old hitching rail is still in place in front of that town's old post office.

The old post itself presents another issue. It has lost a large chunk of its upper parts since 2005, and it had been snapped off at what was once ground level. It has dents in its sides that suggest more than just the one entanglement with a car's bumper. However, recently, the hitching post has been reinstated on the footpath outside the Feilding Club.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2017 for this building is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The hitching post has **low to high national** significance for **representivity, rarity, authenticity, group, associative, pattern** and **educational** heritage values.

⁴¹ *NZ Herald*, 27 April 1929, p. 12

⁴² *Auckland Star*, 5 September 1930, p. 6

⁴³ *Press*, 3 October 1930, p. 13

⁴⁴ *Auckland Star*, 19 July 1933, p. 6

⁴⁵ *Evening Post*, 13 November 1934, p. 7

⁴⁶ *Press*, 27 December 1941, p. 3

The post has **moderate representivity** values as an example of a once common means of tying up horses for short periods. Its design has **high rarity** values as one of only two known posts with groves cut vertically from the top of the post to two holes drilled at right angles and horizontally four to six inches down from the top. The top of the post is also curved on both sides to a shallow pointed arch. Other posts typically had a metal ring for tying up the horses reins.

The post has **low group** values as one of few such structures in the country. However when considered as one of several structures associated with the Feilding Club, including their buildings, fencing and flagpole, it has **moderate group** values.

The post has **high authenticity** if it has been reinstated in its original location.

The post has **high associative** values with the Feilding Club who had it installed in 1904-05.

The post has **high pattern** and **educative** values reflecting the common use of horses as transport from the earliest days of settlement throughout New Zealand and the need for them to be tied up for short periods when in commercial areas. The removal of the posts also demonstrates the decline in use of horses, at first in the larger cities but with smaller rural towns maintaining their use longer. Motorised vehicles saw their demise with very few surviving throughout the country.

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Whyte, Philip, 'Hitching Facilities' in *"Proposed Register of objects and places of historic interest of natural beauty"* (Feilding Borough Council, 1980): Ref: MDC A/2012/2 : 1568, Archives Central, Feilding

Please note that the photos taken of the hitching post in 2005, were taken by myself (Val Burr), on behalf of the NZ Historic Places Trust, for the history of the Feilding Club. That work was subsequently incorporated into the online document: Heritage NZ: 'Feilding Club & Hitching Post': <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/7667>

Thanks also to Rob Garrett and Stuart Atkins, of the Feilding Club, and also the staff at the Coach House Museum, Feilding.

OPIKI TOLL BRIDGE – 1321 Rangitane Road, Opiki



Architect: Joseph Dawson

Construction date: 1917-18

Visible materials: Concrete

Architectural style: Suspension bridge

Use/building type: Suspension bridge

Date and compiler: Ian Bowman, 2014, Val Burr, Ian Bowman 2017

Heritage New Zealand Listing: Category 1

Proposed category: A

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The flax industry, which dates in this region from the 1860s (insofar as Pakeha are concerned), was by the first two decades of the 20th century, making a significant contribution to the region's economy. The lower Manawatu and Horowhenua were important centres for this industry, with the extensive Makerua Swamp being a major part of this. However, the bridge was scarcely built when the flax industry came to an abrupt halt in this vicinity.

The Opiki Suspension Bridge remains that still cross the Manawatu River alongside State Highway 56 at Opiki, have been the subject of various articles and chapters of books - and also the subject of a 128-page book dedicated to its story. This is *Suspended Access: Opiki Toll Bridge 1918-1969*, which was written by Molly J. Akers, and which was published in 2003. The Akers family have a relationship with the bridge from its very start, as three members of the Akers family were amongst the seven original shareholders of the Tane Hemp Company that had the bridge and neighbouring flax mill erected.¹

¹ Akers, Molly J., *This is Suspended Access: Opiki Toll Bridge 1918-1969* (Palmerston North, 2003), p. 25

The bridge has been known by a number of names and variations of names over the years. Included amongst these are: Akers Toll Bridge, Makerua Swamp Bridge, Opiki Swing Bridge, Opiki Bridge, Rangiotu Bridge, Rangitane Bridge, Rangitane Swing Bridge and Tane Flaxmill.² Even the names used for it by the relevant territorial authorities and heritage organisations all differ nowadays.

The Heritage New Zealand Listing which encompasses objects in both Manawatu and Horowhenua District sites states: *“The mill and bridge remains are located on a pastoral flood plain. The structures consist of concrete bridge towers, with suspension wires and hangers dangling between, and the nearby concrete flaxmill chimney, which is approximately 20 metres high, and a boiler pad at its base. These structures no longer have a functional purpose, but have been left as monuments to the local flax industry.”*

A brief history of the site

The Opiki Suspension Bridge was built for the Tane Hemp Company, by Joseph Dawson between March 1917 and January 1918. It was built of black beech, iron rope and concrete, for a total of £2,821.10.00. At 477 feet in length, it was throughout its operational life the longest suspension bridge in New Zealand. It had a 9-foot wide carriageway. When the flaxmill closed, Hugh Akers bought the shares in the bridge from his former partners in the mill. To cover the cost of the bridge’s upkeep, he installed a tollhouse and a tollkeeper in 1925. It remained a privately-owned tollbridge until the present bridge was opened in 1969.³



Figure 1 This photograph, which was taken in 1918 when the bridge was new, was taken from the Horowhenua side of the river, and looks downstream in a northerly direction. The buildings of the River Mill, on the Palmerston North side of the river can be seen in the distance. (Source: ID: Fx122, Public Photograph Collection, Palmerston North Library)

The Tane Flaxmill was built in 1915, and at the time it was one of New Zealand’s largest mills, with four stripping machines in operation. It could produce five tons of dressed fibre daily. This flax was obtained from the 14,500-acre Makerua Swamp. However the mill closed in April 1921, after the flax developed Yellow Leaf disease. Initially the mill had a steel chimney, however this was replaced by the present

concrete chimney in 1918. This became New Zealand’s only concrete chimney built for a flaxmill.⁴ Plans had clearly

been made in the expectation that the mill would run for quite some time.

² Register Record, ‘Tane Hemp Company Limited Suspension Bridge and Flaxmill Remains’, Register No. 9619, NZ Historic Places Trust, in Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc: ‘Opiki Bridge,’ File No: 500005 (held at Te Manawa, Palmerston North)

³ Horowhenua District Council: Research material compiled in 1995-96 by Val Burr for the Opiki Bridge: ‘H 35’

⁴ Horowhenua District Council: Research material compiled in 1995-96 by Val Burr for the Tane Flaxmill Remains: ‘H 36’

The Seifert and Akers families, who were prominent in the flax industry in the area, had joined forces with other investors in 1915 to form the Tane Hemp Company Limited. Because of the difficulty in gaining access through the swamp to harvest the flax and to transport the finished product, the company had then erected the suspension bridge and also built their own roads.

The *Manawatu Times* of 21 June 1917 (p. 7) mentioned progress with the new bridge in the course of an article promoting a cement firm: *“To get nearer home it may be stated that what will be the biggest suspension bridge in New Zealand is now being erected by the Tane Hemp Company. This bridge has a span of 380 feet (sic), and in the decking, towers and abutments, Wilson’s Portland Cement is being exclusively used.”*

The first vehicles finally drove across the new bridge in January 1918.⁵ The following month that *Manawatu Herald* reported that: *“Our representative inspected and crossed the suspension bridge which spans the Manawatu River on the Riverdale Estate yesterday. The span is 466 feet in length, and is supported by 16 steel cables, each cable tested to stand a strain of 80 tons. The cables are supported by four concrete pillars, two on either side of the river, 50 feet high. The bridge will take a load of eight tons. The cables are anchored to massive concrete foundations. The cost of the structure was £3,000, and was erected by the Tane Hemp Co., Ltd. The bridge was constructed to facilitate haulage to and from the mill. It is unfortunate that just as the bridge is finished nature has decreed that the flax must die - at least, this present crop.”*⁶

The new bridge was officially opened in Tuesday, 9th April 1918, but although there was an article in the *Manawatu Standard* to that effect, even Molly Akers, author of the bridge’s story, could find no other details of this event. She notes, however, that there are discrepancies with some of the measurements given in the various sources.⁷ The article stated: *“The official opening took place on Tuesday last of a bridge built over the Manawatu river for the Tane Flaxmilling Company, whose mills are situated near Rangiotu. It is the longest suspension bridge that has been constructed in New Zealand, and probably the biggest bridge of the kind in Australasia. The ropes, of the best plough steel, are hung on four towers of reinforced concrete, each pair of towers being connected with three cement arches. The towers measure 70 feet from the foundations, and stand 62ft above the flooring of the bridge. They are crowned with iron saddles, each saddle having 24 wheels, on which the cables rest. Each cable has a breaking strain of 60 tons, making the breaking strain of the 16 cables employed 960 tons. The total length of the steel ropes is 12,000 foot.”*⁸

The *Manawatu Times* of 13 April 1918 (p. 3) provides some details as to who was present: *“The new suspension bridge at Rangiotu was formally opened this week. There were present: The designer and builder (Mr Joseph Dawson), Messrs A. Ross, G. H. Hodd, John Dick, and James Dick (all of Pahiatua), Mr A. W. Hogg (of Masterton), and Mr Guthrie, engineer (Eketahuna).”*

The *Dominion* of 12th April 1918 (p. 10) gives a more picturesque view of this event under the headline ‘Rangiotu Suspension Bridge: Completion of a big task’:

“This bridge, erected by Mr. Joseph Dawson for the Tane Hemp Company, acquires a unique significance because it is the largest and longest suspension bridge yet built in New Zealand, or, in

⁵ Akers (2003), p. 32

⁶ *Manawatu Herald*, 9 February 1918, p. 2

⁷ Akers (2003), p. 31

⁸ *Manawatu Standard*, 12 April 1918, p. 4

fact, in Australasia. The flaxmills where the bridge is erected are situated on the Manawatu River, about nine miles below Palmerston. In this part of the country are several flaxmills, one of them the largest in the world, scutching over a hundred square miles of flax swamp. A year ago one of the millers met Mr. Dawson.

"I've been hearing about your bridges," he said. "Do you think you could put up one to carry our flax across the Manawatu River?"

"It's a big river," said Mr. Dawson, "but I can do it."

Forthwith the site was examined and an estimate of cost furnished.

"Get on with the bridge," said the man of flax, and Mr. Dawson went to work.

"He had unforeseen difficulties. It was not the want of material which the war had made unpurchasable, but the difficulties of getting the kind of labour he required. Fortunately, in Mr. N. Malcolm was a foreman who constituted a labour gang in himself. The river rose and fell, was flooded, and they had to wait till the flood subsided, but Dawson and Malcolm worked hand and glove, for they had never been beaten. Down went the foundations ten feet deep, and up went the towers, of concrete 60 feet above the level of the banks, and 52 feet above the flooring of the bridge.

"It was a huge work, the building of the four white concrete monuments, and it needed no ordinary strength to haul sixteen heavy steel ropes over the saddles on their summits. But it was done. The towers on which the ropes are suspended, strongly built of reinforced concrete, are double, two on each side of the river, each pair connected by three arches, and their total weight is 288 tons. Besides this, 80 tons of buried concrete are used for the anchors. The length of the bridge is 473 feet, and the width eleven feet. At the top of the towers the cables rest on saddles armed with 24 wheels. Each cable measures 750 feet, so that altogether 12,000 feet of steel rope has been used. The timber used for flooring, joists, and chords is black birch, hard as flint, and more durable than ironbark. The weight of the bridge, as hung from the ropes, is 80 tons.

"Near the bridge is a strong wire rope on which the flax in huge bundles used to travel. Now it is conveyed on a tramline, eight tons at a time, drawn by a couple of horses. Seeing the mills are keeping about a hundred hands employed and producing hundreds of tons of hemp, the advantage of the bridge over the system of rope transit is obvious. It means a huge saving of time, labour, and cost.

"On Tuesday the bridge was well examined, tested, and formally opened in the presence of a large gathering of settlers and experts. Mr. Dawson was present to explain fully all details, and he was warmly congratulated on the success of his latest achievement."



Figure 2 The Opiki Bridge and the Tane Flaxmill chimney with the backdrop hidden by mist, on the morning of 9 January 1996 - photographed with a zoom lens from SH56. The paintwork on the concrete work was still visible then (26 years after the bridge closed), however, it has disappeared now. (Photo: Val Burr)

In 1918, the company had significantly expanded its mill facilities. However, in the early 1920s there was a slump in demand for flax, and at the same time Yellow Leaf disease was devastating the flax crop throughout the area. As a result, this mill, along with most other mills in the area, soon closed down. After ceasing production in 1921, the company went into voluntary liquidation in 1922.⁹ The mill building was demolished in due course, leaving just the concrete chimney still standing. Gradually the swamp was also drained to create farmland.

Given that the nearest road bridges to Opiki that crossed the Manawatu River were at Palmerston North and Shannon, travellers were not unwilling to pay tolls to the Akers family to be permitted to cross their bridge. This, however, did not mean that they wanted to pay them for longer than necessary. For example, the *Evening Post* of 26 April 1939 (p. 11) published a rather optimistic article entitled 'A Third Route: Manawatu Bridges: The Departmental Plans':

"The opinion that the toll bridge at Rangitane should now be made free to motorists was freely expressed by members of the executive of the Automobile Association (Manawatu) at a meeting on Monday evening. It is the last of its kind on the highways of the Dominion, and it was decided to make representations to the Minister of Transport, the Hon. R. Semple, to secure the free passage of motor traffic over the bridge. It allows access to the Opiki district and incidentally gives a shorter route to Wellington from Palmerston North.

"We have plans in hand for a new bridge about seven or eight chains upstream in a better place," said the Hon. R. Semple, Minister of Public Works, when he was asked last evening as to what was likely to be done by the Department to avoid the payment of tolls by those using the Opiki route

⁹ Akers (2003), p. 38

to Wellington. He added that first of all the State had to take over the highway before anything could be done. There was no sense in incurring expenditure on a bridge unless there was a proper highway. They could not wipe out the toll until the new bridge had been built. The new bridge would automatically do away with the tolls, and they were now nearing the time when tenders would be called for the new bridge and approaches.

“It had to be remembered that since he travelled over the route in the course of an inspection some time ago, they had to deal with the Whirokino route because that was the more important of the two. The latter had cost £83,000, and then there had been a preferential subsidy on the No. 60 highway through Shannon, so that when the new bridge was built at Opiki they would have three really good highways to Wellington.”

The wheels of Government moved rather slowly (and a war intervened), and thus another three decades were to pass before Semple’s promised tenders were finally called and the tolls were finally done away with. Accordingly, the present Opiki Bridge on State Highway 56, was officially opened on 22 November 1969, and with that the old suspension bridge became redundant. The removal of its decking then began in February 1970, however, the concrete towers, suspension wires and hangers were left in place – as they remain still.¹⁰

The old bridge was one of the longest main span bridges ever constructed in New Zealand, and it and the chimney remain amongst the most significant traces of the flax industry in the region.¹¹ However, there are extant buildings left at the relatively near-by Miranui and Whitaunui Flaxmill sites (the latter building seemingly so, but not confirmed), in addition to assorted identifiable features, including a NIMT railway line underpass still in use that was built for the Miranui Flaxmill. These two mills were on either side of Shannon, with Miranui being New Zealand’s largest flaxmill. There are also various concrete engine blocks and features from the flaxmills that once stood on the old riverbank at Foxton, where the town’s wharf once was.¹²

Heritage Status

Despite no longer being in use, the bridge has remained a well-known landmark, with one end being in the Horowhenua District Council’s territory, and the other in Manawatu District Council’s territory.

Horowhenua District Council separately lists the *“Opiki Suspension Bridge”* and the nearby *“Tane Flaxmill remains”* under its District Plan (Version 1 July 2015) with the reference numbers H35 and H36 respectively¹³. Both have Category 2 classifications with Horowhenua District Council.

The NZ Historic Places Trust first recognised the significance of the structures in the late 1970s.¹⁴ However, the bridge and the chimney were apparently not entered onto Heritage New Zealand’s list

¹⁰ Akers (2003), pp. 84, 90

¹¹ *Manawatu Standard*, 24 August 2013: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/9081891/Push-to-protect-historic-Opiki-bridge> ; Also, *Manawatu Standard*, 3 December 2013: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/9469596/Landmark-bridge-gets-historic-status>

¹² This information is the result of research undertaken on various flaxmill-related sites by the writer for Horowhenua District Council during 1995-96, and in 2016.

¹³ Horowhenua District Council: Horowhenua District Plan (Operative Version): Version: 1 July 2015: Schedule 2: Historic Heritage – Buildings, Structures & Sites: H35 ‘Opiki Suspension Bridge’ and H36 ‘Tane Flaxmill remains’: <http://www.horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Plans-Strategies/District-Plan/Review-of-Protected-Heritage-Buildings>

until 31 October 2013. At that time, the “*Tane Hemp Company Limited Suspension Bridge and Flaxmill remains*” were given Category 1 status. The associated documentation on the Heritage NZ website provides a very detailed history of the bridge and flaxmill.¹⁵

The Cairn

In March 2003, the Manawatu branch of the NZ Historic Places Trust installed a stone cairn on the side of SH56, with a plaque on the top to explain the bridge’s details and its significance. The builder was Andrew Voss, a member of the committee of the Manawatu branch of NZHPT. As this strip of road is on the Opiki floodway and is sometimes submerged at times of flooding, a solid and water-resistant interpretation panel was clearly essential.¹⁶



Figure 3 This cairn was built on the side of SH 56 in March 2003 by Andrew Voss, on behalf of the Manawatu branch of the NZ Historic Places Trust [now Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc.]. The bridge and chimney can be seen in the distance. (Photo: 24 October 2016)

In addition to the information mentioned above, the plaque adds that there were once three flax mills in the vicinity of the bridge - the Rangitane Mill (1902-1919) and the Tane Mill (1915-1921), which were on the Horowhenua District side of the river, and the River Mill (1904-1918), which was on the Manawatu District side of the river. It adds that this was one of 15 suspension bridges designed and built by Pahiatua bridge-builder Joseph Dawson (1843-1924), and that “*it made an early and elegant use of reinforced concrete in the 48 feet (14.6 m) high towers. The span between*

the towers is 477 feet (154.4 m).”¹⁷

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The concrete chimney has a stepped based and is approximately 20 metres high. The remains of the suspension bridge comprise the two towers either side of the river of pairs of tapered columns connected with three beams. The main cables, hangars and anchorages at either end are still visible, however the decking has been removed.

¹⁴ ‘Tane Hemp Company Limited Suspension Bridge and Flaxmill Remains’: Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/9619>

¹⁵ ‘Tane Hemp Company Limited Suspension Bridge and Flaxmill Remains’: Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/9619>

¹⁶ Horizons web cams: ‘Opiki floodway camera’: <http://old.horizons.govt.nz/keeping-people-safe/emergency-management/web-cams/> (Note that one of these two images, which are updated every 15 minutes, shows both old and new Opiki Bridges in the background)

¹⁷ A newspaper clipping dated 26 March 2003, which covers the construction of this cairn is in the file: Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc: ‘Opiki Bridge,’ File No: 500005

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2015 for this building is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The structures have **national** significance for **physical, historic** and **cultural** values.

The structures have **high architectural and context/group** values as highly visible, somewhat sculptural and unexpected elements in the landscape that have become well-known local landmarks.

The bridge has high **technological, engineering** and **rarity** values as a rare surviving example of the work of engineer Joseph Dawson who specialised in designing suspension bridges and whose use of concrete was relatively early for such structures. It was the longest span suspension bridge in New Zealand for its operational life and is considered to be the longest such bridge in Australasia when built. Neither structure retains high **authenticity**, being essentially ruins.

The mill and bridge have high **pattern** values as rare remaining vestiges of the regional flax industry, which made a significant contribution to the country's economy in the early 20th century. The company's mill was one of the largest in the country and the Makerua Swamp, the largest commercial flax growing area.

The bridge demonstrates a further **pattern** value as the only privately owned, tolled, highway bridge in the country until 1969 when it was replaced by the Opiki Bridge.

The structures have high **people** values in their association with Joseph Dawson and the Seifert and Akers families, the principal founders of the Tane Hemp Company and prominent members of the local flax industry.

Given the level of physical and historic values, the bridge has high **educational** values.

IMAGES



Figure 4 The Opiki Bridge, photographed by Alecia Rousseau from SH56, during a flood in September 2015 (Photo: *NZ Herald*, 24 September 2015: http://m.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11518335)

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Other Sources

Horowhenua District Council: Research material compiled in 1995-96 by Val Burr for the Opiki Bridge: 'H 35'; Tane Flaxmill Remains 'H 36' and the Miranui heritage site 'H47'. Also the 'Miranui Railway Subway' in 2016.

Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc: 'Opiki Bridge,' File No: 500005 (held at Te Manawa, Palmerston North) Note that this file contains a wide variety of material.

ĀPITI HALL WAR MEMORIAL - 10 Makoura Road, Āpiti



Architect/builder: Not known

Construction date: 1934

Visible materials: Marble, concrete

Architectural style: Arch

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2018

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹

The construction of the memorial was debated in the community for a number of years from 1919 to its final construction in 1934. The first group to suggest a memorial was the Red Cross Society who voted £20 for the purpose in 1919. On 15 April of the same year a public meeting was held and £100 was donated from attendees for a memorial. A Memorial Committee was established but found great difficulty in obtaining a suitable site.

The memorial was unveiled on ANZAC Day 1934 at a consecration and unveiling ceremony held by the RSA. Those who spoke at the ceremony included Mr W McKay, Chairman of the Memorial Committee and Rev A F Stewart who gave the dedicatory prayer while Rt Hon John Cobb MP and Minister of Defence unveiled the memorial.

Fourteen names are listed on two marble plaques located on each pillar, either side of the arch.

A rendered wall with low pillars and memorial plaques was added after World War Two with the names of four soldiers who died in World War Two.

¹ Olsen, Peter, Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One, Memorials of the Manawatu District*, Janet Doyle, Feilding, 2015, page 7

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a shallow, rendered, stepped arch supported on rusticated marble pillars on a rendered stepped base. Two marble plaques, one on each of the pillars, have the names of soldiers who fought in World War One from the district. Within the arch is a plaque on the form of a keystone inscribed with "For King and Country". World War Two memorial plaques are fixed either side of the arch. The eastern plaque has 1939 and two names inscribed while the opposite plaque has 1945 inscribed and a further two names.

The arch form was popular from Roman times where it represented victory. In later memorials it came to represent victory of life or victory in death. Obelisks were the most common design with cenotaphs, gates and arches the next most common.

The archway is the entry to the local hall with toilets to the south eastern side and a bus shelter to the north western side of the arch. Further to the south east is a former small church, while the remainder of the immediate area is housing and farmland. Oroua Valley Road, the main road through the small village is to the north west.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an arch form of war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember soldiers' who died in both world wars.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it has been retained on its original site.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern** and **cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in both world wars and where memorial services have been held.

SOURCES

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Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

Online Sources

Google Streetview: www.google.co.nz

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'Rangiotu war memorial': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiotu-war-memorial> (Ministry for Culture and Heritage)

Windsock Base, Original Airfield at Parorangi, Kimbolton Road, Cheltenham



Architect: Unknown (probably Bruce Short)

Construction date: Probably late 1920s

Visible materials: Concrete, steel bronze plaque

Architectural style: -

Use/building type: Concrete plinth

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, Val Burr, 2017

Heritage NZ Listing: Nil

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The fairly substantial concrete block, or plinth, just inside the road fence near Hato Paora College in Kimbolton Road, Cheltenham, is a remnant of Manawatu's first aerodrome. This airstrip, which was located in the roadside paddock of a substantial sheep and beef farm named 'Parorangi', came to be referred to variously as 'Feilding Aero Club's aerodrome at Parorangi', 'Feilding Aerodrome' and later as 'Parorangi Aerodrome' - to distinguish it from its replacement at Taonui. The concrete block is the base for the pole that once held the aerodrome's windsock.

In addition to providing the means by which pilots could identify wind direction at a distance, this windsock base also held a fuel tank. This tank, which was designed by Bruce Short, was not unlike a 44-gallon drum in general appearance – set vertically – and with the windsock pole extending out of the top of that.¹ Whether the tank was a saddle arrangement in relation to the pole, or some other layout, was not researched. However, having the fuel tank perched on top of the block possibly made

¹ Interview with Peter Short, son of Bruce Short and grandson of Ernest Short (senior), on 15 March 2017

for easier access to the plane's fuel tank – especially where there might be few other people available to assist with the refuelling operation. The fuel tanks on the biplanes that utilised Parorangi, were located centrally in the upper wing. The alternative ground-based fuel 'tanks' of the day were likely to



Figure 1 This scene shows Capt. Russell landing his two-seater De Havilland DH6 aircraft at Feilding Racecourse for the first time on 17 August 1920. The following afternoon it landed at the site of the future Parorangi Aerodrome for the first time. Then during the night of 25-26 August, when at Petone, the plane was damaged during a gale. It was then returned to Auckland by train, where it was placed in storage.¹ (Feilding Library photo TRA:ae2: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/16562>)

Russell, took passengers paying five guineas for flights. From that time aircraft flying across country landed here. In 1928 local members of the newly formed Manawatu Aero Club began using this 60 acre paddock as their landing strip.

“On June 8 1930, the Feilding Aeroclub (sic) was formed with Ernest's son, Ernest Ebenezer (Ab) Short as president. Until July 1937 (sic), when the Taonui Aerodrome land was purchased, this was the club's airfield. Members flew Avro Avians and de Havilland Moths.

“The concrete plinth was the base for both the fuel tank and the pole on which the windsock was flown.”

While there are some small errors in the plaque's text, based on information found during this study, it seems likely that the aerodrome was in use to an uncertain extent from about 1928. In addition, around this time it was the Manawatu's only 'real' aerodrome – although how it developed to that point is not presently certain. Then, once the Milson Aerodrome was established in 1931, Parorangi appears to have gradually been phased out, other than for usage by local pilots such as the Shorts and the Burrells. The aerodrome's considerable distance from Feilding was a significant factor. However, it still had refuelling facilities and a hangar capable of holding at least two planes. This saw an interest in the aerodrome maintained until at least the 1936 Gale – which destroyed the hangar and two planes. By this time, the replacement Taonui Aerodrome was under development – with that site being in a far more convenient location. It was also under the ownership of the Feilding Aero Club, as opposed to being a large paddock in an operational farm.

It is also apparent that it was the children of Ernest Short - and the WWI pilot husband of one of them - rather than Ernest himself, who inspired the development of the airstrip in this location at the time

be 44-gallon drums, with a hand-operated pump attached to the drum.² At least some of this upper structure is thought to have still been in place in the 1950s.

In the latter 1990s, the Manawatu Branch of the NZ Historic Places Trust had a brass plaque placed on the concrete block. Its text broadly outlines the significance of the location:

“The first airfield in the Feilding district was here. Ernest Short, owner of the property, called Parorangi, was keenly interested in both motor vehicles and aviation. On August 18 1920, the first plane to come to Feilding landed here after visiting the Feilding Racecourse the day before. The pilot, Captain Richard

² This is based on suggestions made by the writer's brother, Bruce Burr – 13 March 2017

this was done. However, the father's interest in the development of modern transportation (increasingly powerful early motorcars primarily) had clearly rubbed off on his children.

Some Wider Background

The NZ Permanent Air Force (NZPAF) was formed in 1923, and NZ's first military aviation base was established at Wigram in 1916 (it was originally named Sockburn until 1923). Work began on Hobsonville Air Base the following year. The Territorial Air Force was established at the same time as the NZPAF and the 72 ex-WWI pilots who were original members of the Territorial Air Force included four (Buckley, Burrell, Chandler and Hall) who appear in the story of this aerodrome. The NZPAF was renamed the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) in 1934, and then established as an independent military service in 1937.³



E.F. Harvie, in his book *George Bolt: Pioneer Aviator*, states that in 1924, after a few years of activity that included the war years, “nearly all aerial activity was suspended and no civil flying, and almost none of any military significance, took place for another four years.”⁴ Thus the planes that began arriving at Parorangi in 1928, placed it as being operational at the very start of the general usage of aviation in New Zealand's history – as opposed to the war planes and the joyriders of the earlier era.

Figure 2 This is the earliest photo located during this study that was taken at the Parorangi Aerodrome – although there is one known from the 1920 visit.¹ This photo shows the former Mayor of Feilding, Mr .W.E. Carthew, with pilot Oscar Garden, who had flown his second-hand Gipsy Moth G-AASA ‘Kia Ora’ (the plane in the background) from England to Australia in October 1930. At time of departure from England, Garden had only had 39 hours of hours’ of flying experience. This photo was probably taken when Garden arrived on 10 December 1930 – Garden and three other planes then flew to Whanganui on 11 December 1930. Garden’s congratulatory tour then proceeded northward via Taranaki.¹

With regards to why this landing strip might have gone on to become an early aerodrome, Graham Parsons, in his article ‘Cleared to Land: Early Days of Aviation in Palmerston North’, states that: “*The establishment of aero clubs had come about through the enthusiasm of a small group of war pilots anxious to maintain*

their flying skills and foster an interest in aviation. These clubs were financed partly by a government anxious to maintain a corps of trained pilots, and partly by funds earned through flight training and air charter. The government’s subsidy of £25 to each pilot trained to ‘A’ Licence (private pilot) standard, and its assistance in providing aircraft, greatly helped the development of the clubs in their early years. By 1938, aero clubs’ membership included 649 private pilots and 29 commercial pilots, of whom about 60 had been trained in Palmerston North.”⁵

³ New Zealand History: Royal New Zealand Air Force – Timeline: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/rnzaf/timeline> ; also: Squadron Leader J.M. S. Ross, *Royal New Zealand Air Force: Territorial Air Force* (Wellington, 1955): <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WH2AirF-c2-5.html>

⁴ E.F. Harvie, *George Bolt: Pioneer Aviator* (Wellington, 1974), p. 6

⁵ Graham Parsons, ‘Cleared to Land: Early Days of Aviation in Palmerston North’, in *The Manawatu Journal of History*, 2010, Issue No. 6

Squadron Leader J.M.S. Ross, in *Royal New Zealand Air Force: The Aero Clubs and the Civil Reserve of Pilots*, wrote that aero club flying began in New Zealand in 1929 and 1930. However, by 1937, the 'A' Licence standard was considered too low to be of much practical use. Also in many cases the Government got no return for its subsidy, as many trainees were not medically fit for service and commercial flying. Furthermore, most clubs were running at a loss and on the verge of bankruptcy. A new Civil Reserve of Pilots was then instituted, and Flight Lieutenant H.B. Burrell was appointed Superintendent of Reserves under Group Captain Isitt. Burrell, under the direction of Isitt, then co-ordinated the methods of training and testing all trainees to ensure they reached a satisfactory standard.⁶

Hugh Bartholomew Burrell, known as 'Sam', had grown up at the farm 'Omatangi', less than five kilometres further along Kimbolton Road in the direction of Feilding. During WWII, Burrell, by then a Wing-Commander, served as Commanding Officer of Hobsonville Air Base and then other stations. He received an O.B.E. in mid-1940⁷, and in due course became Chief Inspector of Aircraft and Accidents, before retiring in about 1946.⁸

Thus Parorangi had the advantage of a very good landing strip. It also, in Sam Burrell (who we will meet again shortly), had the presence of a former Royal Air Force pilot who became a career Air Force officer; who in turn had grown up just down the road - and who had married into the Short family. For this reason, there was nothing unusual about having Defence Dept. fighter planes popping in for a visit to this particular landing strip in its time.

'Parorangi' – the Farm

In effect there were two Parorangi estates – both owned at different times by Ernest Short. The original Parorangi estate was located near Waituna and consisted of 5,500 acres. This was sold in 1912⁹, with Short having purchased the former Riddiford estate near Cheltenham, in 1911.¹⁰ The latter property became the new Parorangi - and the future site of the aerodrome.

In June 1915, Ernest Short was described as being "*in one of the highest positions in the Dominion as an agriculturist, and as a breeder of Romney sheep, Hereford cattle, and Clydesdale horses.*" He was also president of the Manawatu A. and P. Association and had been noted as a breeder throughout the whole Southern Hemisphere, while still a comparatively young man. He was, however, now "*more mature*" and he had recently devoted himself to building a "*magnificent*" home, which was described as one of the largest in the country.

While the house's architect was not identified during this brief study of it, its builders were two Feilding contractors, Messrs. Baker and Urqhart,¹¹ and its construction began in January 1914.¹² Additional work was undertaken by Italian craftsmen brought into the country for that purpose, while

⁶ Squadron Leader J.M.S. Ross, *Royal New Zealand Air Force: The Aero Clubs and the Civil Reserve of Pilots* (Wellington, 1955): <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WH2AirF-c3-5.html#name-021145-mention>

⁷ *NZ Herald*, 11 July 1940, p. 11

⁸ C.N. Maclean (ed.), *Wanganui Collegiate School Register: Fourth Edition, From 1854 to 1963 (April)*, (Wanganui, 1964), pp. 161, Entry No. 1934. Burrell and his family settled on Norfolk Island in 1946, and he died there in 1960

⁹ *Feilding Star*, 10 May 1912, p. 2

¹⁰ *Feilding Star*, 17 June 1911, p. 2; Manawatu District Libraries: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/17617>

¹¹ Manawatu District Libraries: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/17617>

¹² *Feilding Star*, 10 January 1914, p. 4

its extensive gardens were designed by Alfred Buxton who later designed the gardens for the old Parliament Buildings in Auckland.¹³ The house was demolished in 2017.

As well as breeding quality livestock of various types, the Parorangi Boys' Farm Camp was also run at the property. These boys were taught farming activities during their stay at the property.¹⁴

Early Flight Linked to Feilding

While the history of this aerodrome remains a 'work in progress', there are a few highlights that could be explored further in terms of more in-depth research. In addition to Ernest Short himself, there are a number of others who appear to have played a role in inspiring the establishment of flight in and around circa 1920s Feilding. For example, possibly one of the first residents of Feilding to fly as a passenger - other than those trained during wartime - was the influential politician and journalist, Fred Pirani. He owned the *Feilding Star* from 1906 until he handed management of it over to his son in June 1920. The family's company then continued to own the newspaper until February 1936.¹⁵ Fred had been taken on a flight over London in September 1918 – although engine trouble had intervened somewhat in terms of the comforts of the flight.¹⁶

The aforementioned Sam Burrell, son of Hugh Burrell of the nearby 'Omatangi' property further along Kimbolton Road, does not show up in material sighted in relation to this study as the prime mover of the aerodrome in the 1920s. However, he appears to have been very closely aligned to it, especially as a result of his marriage in 1921 to Evelyn Short (who was known as 'Nean'), daughter of Parorangi's owner, Ernest Short, and his wife Jessie.¹⁷ Sam Burrell had registered for active service in June 1915. He was then aged about eighteen.¹⁸ About six months later, the *Feilding Star* of 7 January 1916 (p. 2) recorded the "*Messrs Wilfred Fowler and Sam Burrell, the two Feilding boys who are going Home to join the Royal Flying Corps, left Wellington by the 'Remuera' today.*" During the war, he served as a Captain in the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Air Force, where he was mentioned in dispatches during his time in France. After the war, he worked as a mechanical engineer and director of the car sales firm Burrell & Durrant, and also served on the Feilding Borough Council, before returning to the Air Force between the wars.¹⁹ It is in this latter capacity that he later returns to this story.

Feilding's First Aeroplane Visit

The first aeroplane to fly onto Feilding, a 90 h.p. De Havilland DH6, came almost two years after war's end – at which time flight was clearly a huge novelty. The *Feilding Star* of 16 July 1920 reported that Messrs Walsh Bros. of Auckland, were planning to fly a plane down from that city to visit Wellington, and co-owner Mr Vivian Walsh had been visiting towns en route to select suitable landing places. They intended to stop at various locations on the way and to give short passenger flights. Twenty-three-year-old Captain Richard Russell, D.F.C., Croix de Guerre, was to be the plane's pilot.²⁰

¹³ Hato Paora College: History: <http://www.hatopaora.school.nz/history.html>

¹⁴ For example, *Feilding Star*, 27 March 1918, p. 2

¹⁵ *Feilding Star*, 30 June 1920, p. 7(4); *Auckland Star*, 18 February 1936, p. 9

¹⁶ *Southland Times*, 26 September 1918, p. 5

¹⁷ Marriage Registration No. 1921/9489: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

¹⁸ *Feilding Star*, 7 June 1915, p. 2

¹⁹ Maclean, C.N. (ed.), *Wanganui Collegiate School Register: Fourth Edition, From 1854 to 1963 (April)*, (Wanganui, 1964).

Entry No. 1934; *Feilding Star*, 24 August 1920, p. 5

²⁰ *Feilding Star*, 16 July 1920, p. 2

A month later an advert appeared in the *Feilding Star* stating that Walsh Bros.' De Havilland plane would be visiting Feilding on 17 August for one day only, and that it would be conducting passenger flights from the Feilding Racecourse at five guineas for each passenger. The plane was by then in Palmerston North and could only be spared to spend one day in Feilding.²¹

The following day the *Feilding Star* recorded that: "*Out of the ethereal blue came the aeroplane to Feilding this morning and grounded at the racecourse. Much local interest was shown in the visit of this first aeroplane to fly to Feilding, and Captain Russell, the pilot, was welcomed to the town by leading residents.*" A detailed description of the subsequent day's events was then recorded – with business having been suspended in the town during the time the plane was there: "*the desire to get a view of the plane being stronger than the trading instinct for the time being.*"²²

The next day more Feilding residents had rides in the plane when it did in fact return to the town. Then in the afternoon the plane flew to Parorangi carrying Feilding photographer, Bert Hobday, who paid £15 (or guineas) for the privilege.²³ Once there, Captain Russell took Masters' Bruce Short (c14), 'Pat' (W.H.) Burrell (c13) and Miss E. Short (c19) up for a ride.²⁴ The first of these three passengers is the person who later had the concrete block built for the windsock. The latter two were the younger brother and the future wife of the aforementioned Royal Air Force pilot Sam Burrell. An article that appeared in the *Feilding Star* of 26 March 1936, at the time of the Cheltenham School jubilee, also provided an account of the day. This stated that: "*On August 18th Arbour Day, great excitement was caused in the school by the arrival of an aeroplane at Parorangi. The children were allowed to visit the machine – the first they had seen. Two of the senior boys, W.H. Burrell and B. Short, had the honour of being taken for a flight.*"²⁵

After the visit, Captain Russell commented that "*he found the paddock in front of Mr Ernest Short's home at Parorangi (to be) the second best landing place experienced during his flights in New Zealand.*"²⁶ Which landing place was in fact the best, was not recorded.

It is noteworthy that while Ernest Short's interest in new twentieth century transportation is mentioned in relation to the first flight to Parorangi, he himself is not directly referred to as being involved on that date. Meanwhile, it was his daughter and young son (and the latter's schoolmate Pat Burrell) who took to the air that day. In fact, seven days previously, the *Feilding Star* had published extracts from a letter Ernest Short had written (about dairy cows and farm workers) in Vancouver, Canada, on 17 July 1920. The *Feilding Star* had added (at the time of publication) that Short and another local man, Mr T.L. McLean, were touring the US and Canada.²⁷ Therefore, perhaps it was in fact the Short and/or Burrell children (of various ages) who had arranged the plane's visit to the property – during Ernest Short's absence in North America? It seems unlikely that it was a pure

²¹ *Feilding Star*, 16 August 1920, p. 5 (x 2)

²² *Feilding Star*, 17 August 1920, p. 5

²³ *Manawatu Standard*, 29 March 2012: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/your-manawatu/feilding-herald/6660213/Aerial-photos-capture-early-Feilding> Hobday's photos are at the Feilding Library and at the Community Archives, Feilding. Peter Short has a photo taken with the plane at Parorangi that day.

²⁴ *Manawatu Times*, 19 August 1920, p. 5; Birth Registrations: 1901/3873, 1906/3817 & 1907/351: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

²⁵ *Feilding Star*, 26 March 1936, in *The Feilding Star Scrapbook, 1 June 1935 to 30 May 1936*, Feilding Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18530#idx21871>

²⁶ *Feilding Star*, 19 August 1920, p. 2

²⁷ *Feilding Star*, 11 August 1920, p. 2 (x2)

coincidence that they set the plane down in the front paddock that day – and if it had been, this would probably have been mentioned in the newspaper.

On August 19th Captain Russell was to leave Palmerston North at 10:30am (from a paddock on the corner of Gillespies Line and Tremaine Avenue) bound for Wellington, via Masterton. His passenger for this trip was to be Mr (later Sir) M.H. Oram, who repeatedly appears throughout the Parorangi Aerodrome story.²⁸ Meanwhile, the De Havilland's engine had been replaced while it was in Palmerston North – it was noted a few days later!²⁹ On 19 October 1920, Captain Russell and passengers made an emergency stop at Feilding with engine trouble, while en route from Whanganui to Hastings – then 30 minutes later they departed again after some “*quick adjustments.*”³⁰

On Friday, 11 November 1920, while giving more rides at New Plymouth, this time in Walsh Bros.' Avro aeroplane, the plane's engine suddenly shut off as it was coming in to land, and it plummeted to the ground. The engine had restarted moments before the impact, but too late to prevent the crash. Captain Russell and his two passengers, New Plymouth's mayor and a young woman, were all killed in the crash that occurred before hundreds of onlookers.³¹

The tragedy was made all the more shocking for Feilding residents by the fact that the plane had arrived at Feilding racecourse on the preceding Monday (8th November) had been giving rides daily from that base for most of the week.³² There is no indication that it visited Parorangi during that visit.

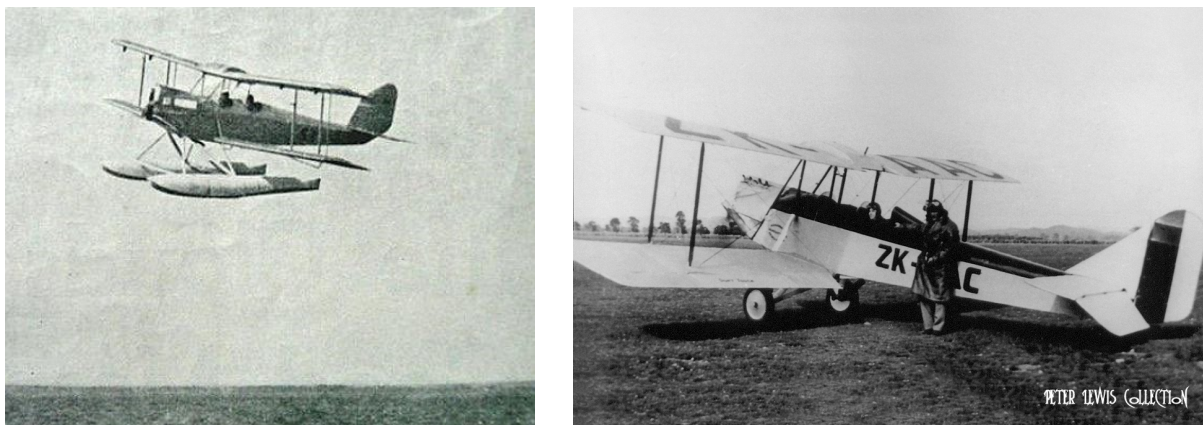


Figure 3 These are the two planes that were destroyed at Parorangi in the 1936 Gale – pictured in happier times. On the **LEFT** is the Spartan Arrow, which was photographed during testing as a seaplane at Felixstowe in the UK in 1930. It was registered in New Zealand as ZK-ACQ in 1931, and Sir Matthew Oram purchased it in December 1934.¹ On the **RIGHT** is the Avro 594 Avian IIIA ZK-AAC (a.k.a. the ‘Honeymoon plane’¹) in the only photo (of seven) sighted for this study, where it is the right way up.¹ After the planes were destroyed, their remains were stored in Auckland until they were burnt in a fire in 1939. The identity ZK-AAC was re-issued to a Cessna 162 Skycatcher in 2011.¹

Feilding's New Aerodrome

Captain Russell's 1920 comment that the paddock at the Parorangi property was the second best landing place he had encountered in New Zealand, clearly had an impact on the local people. References to planes flying to Feilding over subsequent years can sometimes be vague on where the planes landed. The racecourse still seemingly featuring sometimes in the early years, but certainly Parorangi became the key place – and it was the place that was developed as such.

²⁸ *Manawatu Times*, 19 August 1920, p. 5

²⁹ *Feilding Star*, 28 August 1920, p. 2

³⁰ *Feilding Star*, 19 October 1920, p. 5

³¹ *Feilding Star*, 12 November 1920, p. 2; E.F. Harvie, *George Bolt: Pioneer Aviator* (Wellington, 1974), p. 116

³² *Feilding Star*, 12 November 1920, p. 2

A factor in the timing of the early use of Parorangi could also involve the death of Ernest Short on 23 September 1924, after a long illness. Dorothy Pilkington's article on him, entitled 'The Romney King: Ernest Short and Parorangi', records that "from around 1915 he began to suffer from recurrent and progressively more serious bouts of illness. Sadly, for such an astute and able man, the nature of his condition led to periods of mental delusion and from 1919 he spent some time in Porirua Hospital."³³ Following his death, his "famous Parorangi stud Hereford cattle" were sold at a dispersal sale in March 1925.³⁴

Thus it was the next generation of Ernest Short's family who were the ones most instrumental in the development of the aerodrome, rather than Ernest himself. And certainly they were well involved in these activities – with Ebenezer Ernest Short (known variously as 'Ab' or 'Eb') being the family member attributed with having organised the establishment of the airfield.³⁵ It seems likely that the landing strip catered to family, extended family (especially the Burrell family), their visiting Air Force friends, and those friends that they had who had access to a plane at that time. It is also not clear, however, based on the information sighted for this study, just how often planes visited Parorangi (if at all) between 1920 and 1928 – the latter date seemingly being the time at which the aerodrome became operational. Such information will become available in time when the *Feilding Star* issues become searchable on the newspaper website Papers Past.³⁶ Certainly any visiting plane was still sufficiently significant to attract media attention in the latter 1920s.

The Honeymoon Plane

The earliest information located during this study the second plane to land at Parorangi (or rather almost certainly Parorangi, as only 'Feilding' is mentioned) appears in the *Evening Post* of 17 December 1928 – and also an array of other NZ newspapers around the same time. The article reported that newly-weds Captain Maurice Buckley (of the NZ Air Force, Christchurch) and his bride, Lykke ('Pat') Smidt (formerly of Awapuni, PN) had flown from Feilding to Blenheim the previous day aboard a borrowed Avro Avian. It added that as soon as they took off from Feilding to return to the South Island, that Captain Buckley had handed control of the plane over to his wife. She had then flown the plane all the way to Blenheim. This therefore made her the first woman to fly across Cook Strait.

The plane had originally landed in Palmerston North (more correctly Kairanga County) two days prior to the wedding - "on a field on Milson's line owned by Mr J. Linklater, M.P. It will probably be the landing ground of the newly-formed Manawatu Aero Club."³⁷ The couple had then married at All Saints' Church, PN, on December 12th. The Feilding connection after first leaving the plane at Milson is not clear, however, the evidence points to Parorangi being the eventual departure point. This is also likely to be another link to the Burrell family.

³³ Dorothy Pilkington, 'The Romney King: Ernest Short and Parorangi' in *The Manawatu Journal of History*, 2007, Issue No. 3: p. 39

³⁴ *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 22 September 1924, p. 2, 24 September 1924, p. 2, 5 January 1925, p. 3

³⁵ Email: Dorothy Pilkington, Napier, 13 March 2017

³⁶ Note that Papers Past is only searchable to the end on 1920 at present.

³⁷ *Auckland Star*, 17 October 1928, p. 12; *Evening Post*, 11 December 1928, p. 9, 13 December 1928, p. 13, 17 December 1928, p. 15; *Press*, 15 December 1928, p. 2

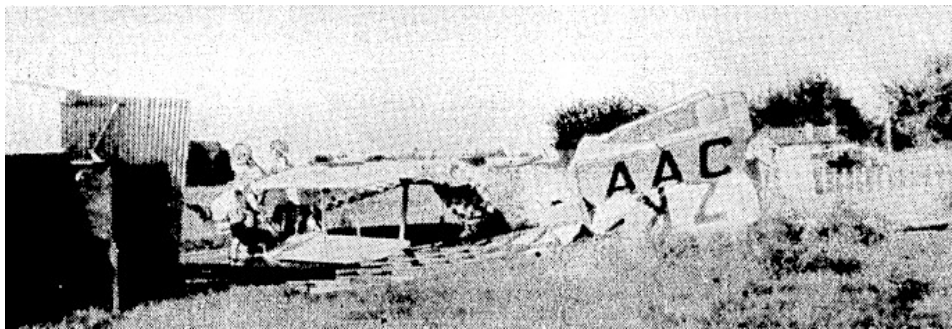
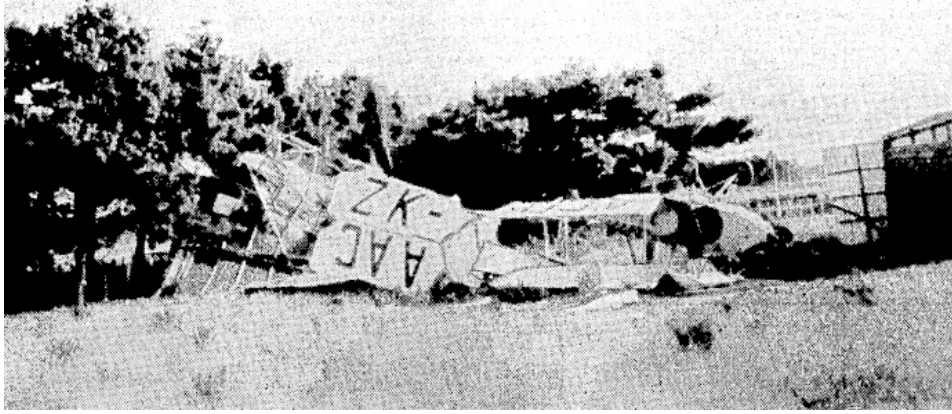


Figure 4 These two images show the tangled wreckage of Mr M.H. Oram's two planes (the Avro Avian and the Spartan Arrow) that were stored in the hangar at the Parorangi Aerodrome at the time of the 1936 Gale.¹

It is noteworthy that this Avro Avian had been borrowed from a Captain Hall, of Hororata. At this time, Captain Ken W.J. Hall, of Hororata, owned a brand new Avro 594 Avian IIIA, Registration No. G-NZAV that subsequently became Reg. No. ZK-AAC – and thus the same plane that was wrecked at Parorangi during the 1936 Gale.³⁸

The Middle Districts' (Manawatu) Aero Club

On 20 November 1928, several weeks before the Buckleys' flight to Blenheim, a well-attended meeting of flying enthusiasts had been held. The result of this meeting was the decision to form an Aero Club for the Manawatu District. The meeting had been addressed by Mr M.H. Oram, and he was ultimately elected the president of the new organisation. Amongst the names mentioned as members of the interim committee formed that night, was H.B. (Sam) Burrell. This committee then set about formulating a policy for advancing aviation in the Manawatu, and to forming the Aero Club. They also began work toward buying land for an airfield, and also the necessary buildings. Eventually the work this club and another group called the Manawatu Airport League (formed 1930) undertook, saw the establishment of what would eventually become the Palmerston North Airport at Milson. However, in February 1931, at the time of the Hawkes Bay earthquake, the grass on the new runway was just becoming established – despite which Milson's airfield was used extensively for flying medical and

³⁸ *Evening Post*, 17 December 1928, p. 15; 'AV ROE & CO LIMITED PRODUCTION', Entry No. 174: <http://www.ab-ix.co.uk/avian.pdf>

other urgent supplies into the disaster zone.³⁹ Sam Burrell was one of the Air Force pilots involved in this work, and he is understood to have piloted one of the first planes to land in the area after the quake. Evidently it was so windy on the trip up that a 'Baby Austin' car passed him near Waipukurau!⁴⁰

Various Activities at the Aerodrome

Meanwhile, activities had continued at Parorangi. For example, on 25th April 1929 two planes (a De Havilland Moth and an Avro Avian) made a record non-stop flight together from Auckland to Feilding. The time they took was three hours and thirty minutes, and this was the first time such a journey had been made in "one hop", as they normally refuelled at Hawera. The aerial activity over Feilding that afternoon was enhanced by having four planes in the air together, the other two (a Bristol Fighter – co-incidentally flown by Sam Burrell - and another De Havilland Moth belonging to the Marlborough Aero Club) having previously arrived. All four were then "housed on the estate of the late Mr E. Short, 'Parorangi', Kimbolton Road." The following morning "a demonstration was given by the four machines in the presence of the Hon. T.M. Wilford, Minister of Defence, who arrived by the express last evening."⁴¹

On the morning of 29 April 1929, after participating in an air show at Hastings, five planes (including yet another De Havilland Moth) flew into Parorangi, so that Sam Burrell's Bristol Fighter could be refuelled there. They then flew out of Parorangi - in two groups about 15 minutes apart - bound for Blenheim. However, the planes soon struck a severe storm, and although the first three planes reached Blenheim safely, despite very bad conditions, the other two did not. One of these two planes - Sam Burrell's - had soon been forced to turn back to Feilding, however, the remaining plane then seemingly disappeared. This was the aforementioned De Havilland Moth belonging to the Marlborough Aero Club.

With the news that there was a plane missing, four more De Havilland Moths that had still been at Hastings: "flew in formation to Feilding, where we reported to Captain Burrell, the Defence pilot, who was there with his Bristol Fighter." Preparations were just being made to make Feilding (Parorangi) the base for the search planes, when the missing plane and its crew were located - relatively safe - at Ship's Cove, after a forced landing on the beach due to engine trouble.⁴²

Feilding was also an important stopping point in the course of other flying records. For example, Captain Hewitt and his De Havilland Moth overnighted there in February 1930 when en route to Dunedin to attempt the first direct flight between Dunedin and Auckland – although it is also possible that he had landed at the Feilding Racecourse on this occasion. His successful 10-hour mission (following the railway lines) subsequently occurred on 15 March 1930.⁴³

³⁹ 'A History of the Manawatu Aero Club' (post-2010) , pp. 2-3

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/20179523/aeroclub-a-history-manawatu-districts-aero-club>

⁴⁰ *Evening Post*, 9 February 1931, p. 10; also interview with John Bolton-Riley, 19 March 2017. Sam Burrell and Captain Buckley (the 'honeymoon pilot') certainly flew the first two planes into Westport following the Murchison Earthquake of 17 June 1929 (*Evening Post*, 18 June 1929, p. 10)

⁴¹ *Feilding Star*, 26 April 1929, p. 7

⁴² *NZ Herald*, 30 April 1929, p. 10, 1 May 1929, p. 12; *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 1 May 1929, p. 2; *Auckland Star*, 2 May 1929, 10. Note that the *Horowhenua Chronicle* article provides a very detailed account of experiences of the downed pilots and their plane, while the *NZ Herald* article published 30 April 1929 describes the extensive WWI background of the pilot, Captain Noel E. Chandler. The plane survived to crash again in 1931 (*Press*, 19 October 1931, p. 4)

⁴³ *Auckland Star*, 17 March 1930, p. 9

On April 3rd, 1930, a group of planes set out from Blenheim for air pageants to be held at Hawkes Bay, Hawera and Auckland. These pilots included Miss Aroha Clifford in her Avro Avian and three other planes, including (now) Flight-Lieut. Sam Burrell, by then of Wigram, and Flight-Lieut. M.W. Buckley (the aforementioned 'Honeymoon' groom), both in Air Force Gipsy Moths.⁴⁴ A fifth plane, also flown by a woman pilot, Miss P. Bennett, then arrived and followed the party across Cook Strait. However, only four planes crossed Levin together, at around 5:00pm. The *Levin Chronicle* remarked that one of the planes "*looped the loop*" as they crossed the centre of the town. They all subsequently overnighted at Parorangi, before heading to their next destination the following day.⁴⁵

Aroha Clifford had become the first woman in NZ to gain her pilot's license through an aero club – gaining it on 5 August 1929. Her plane, ZK-AAC (at the time of this flight with its original registration [G-NZAV] still showing), has already featured here as the 'honeymoon plane.' Four months later, on 25 August 1930, ZK-AAC was briefly back at Parorangi with a new owner, Mr R. Berryman of Wellington. All went well there and most of the way home – until it hit some telegraph lines and flipped upside down, while landing at Paekakariki to refuel. Both plane and pilot were a bit battered, but were soon mended.⁴⁶ As already mentioned, it was later owned by Sir Matthew Oram and became one of the two planes smashed at Parorangi in the 1936 Gale.⁴⁷

The Feilding Aero Club

By mid-June 1930, the Palmerston North Aero Club had practically given up hope of securing a site for an airstrip in the vicinity of the city, and it was believed that Feilding would be (or remain) the centre of aerial activity for the district. When Wing-Commander Grant-Dalton passed through Palmerston North, he was "*way-laid*" en route to Feilding and taken to see potential alternatives to Feilding. However, he pointed out that their suggestions (near the Esplanade) could only be temporary due to the increasing size of planes. He then went to Feilding, where "*an enthusiastic body of citizens, to the number of 70, met to further the interests of flying.*" The main topic of discussion was that Feilding would "*make a bold bid to be recognised as the centre of aerial activity for the district.*" It was then unanimously decided to form a Feilding Aero Club.⁴⁸

The Feilding Aero Club - based at Parorangi - was thus formed on 8 June 1930. Its first president was Mr E.E. Short (Ernest Ebenezer, son of the late Ernest Short), while Mr W.H. McLean became its first secretary.

Meanwhile, on 3 April 1930, the Manawatu Club, which had no aircraft, combined with the New Plymouth, Hawera and Wanganui Aero Clubs to form the Western Federated Flying Club. This was aimed at consolidating government subsidies to ensure early flying activity, and to minimise the cost of providing pilot instructors.⁴⁹ The New Plymouth club had a plane.

⁴⁴ *Press*, 4 April 1930, p. 17

⁴⁵ *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 4 April 1930, p. 4. As an aside, Sam Burrell's sister-in-law (nee Short) lived in Levin, and so perhaps that inspired the 'loop'. Also: *Auckland Star*, 8 April 1930, p. 9

⁴⁶ *Evening Post*, 25 August 1930, pp. 7 & 11; Jenny Scott's Flickr page:

https://www.flickr.com/photos/adelaide_archivist/2425417742/in/photostream/

⁴⁷ Airhistory.org.uk: 'Golden Years of Aviation': Entry No. Avro 594 Avian IIIA 'ZK-AAC':

http://www.airhistory.org.uk/gy/reg_ZK-.html Aroha Clifford married Olaf Brustad in September 1931 and died following childbirth in December 1933, aged 25: 'The Wings over New Zealand Aviation Forum':

<http://rnzaf.proboards.com/thread/23744/brustads-death>

⁴⁸ *Evening Post*, 30 June 1930, p. 10.

⁴⁹ *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 4 April 1930, p. 6

This was a temporary measure and by September 1930, the Manawatu club was permitted to run an Art Union to raise funds to obtain a plane. The Club was finally able to secede from the Western Federated Flying Club in February 1932, as a result of the successful Art Union.⁵⁰ The Milson Aerodrome Inc. has also been formed in October 1930, and the aerodrome was then officially opened in December 1931. Mr M.H. Oram was by that time the president of the Manawatu Aero Club. And the plane that, coincidentally, the Club had just purchased – in May 1932 - was the ever-reappearing Avro Avian ('Honeymoon plane') ZK-AAC, at a cost of £360.⁵¹

Meanwhile the Feilding Aero Club also became affiliated to the Western Federated Flying Club, and thus flying tuition was also able to be carried out at Parorangi.⁵² Accordingly, the *NZ Herald* of 29 November 1930 reported that: *"The Feilding Aero Club has now reached a stage when it is ready to commence training pupils, and has three aeroplanes available for this purpose. The club's aerodrome is situated at Parorangi, six miles from Feilding, and the wide areas of land in that locality make it ideal for the training of pupils."*⁵³

Ten days later the *NZ Herald* reported that on December 8th: *"The Feilding Aero Club's training machine, with Captain Gibbons and a pupil on board, met with a slight mishap this morning, which will put the aeroplane out of commission for a few days. While they were setting out on an early flight at the club's aerodrome the engine stalled. The machine was only a short distance up and there was not time for Captain Gibbons to take over control from the pupil who was in charge of the aeroplane. It landed rather heavily, causing slight structural damage. The occupants were only slightly shaken."*⁵⁴

Parorangi was still the Manawatu's only functioning aerodrome at this point, even though Milson was in preparation. Therefore, when novice pilot Oscar Garden – who had just flown from England to Australia – arrived in the Manawatu on 10 December 1930 aboard his well-travelled second-hand Gipsy Moth aircraft, G-AASA 'Kia Ora', in the course of a congratulatory tour on the country, it was at Parorangi that he touched down. Accompanied from Wellington by another plane flown by Captain Haig, they were met at Longburn by two Western Federation Flying Club planes (ZK-AAX and ZK-ABS – both from Taranaki⁵⁵), and the four planes had then flown over Palmerston North, en route to Parorangi. Garden and Haig were then driven back to Palmerston North for a civic reception, and also lunch with the Milson Aerodrome Society and the Manawatu Aero Club. At the civic reception, Mr M.H. Oram spoke of Garden's achievements: (1) He had flown from England to Australia with very little training; (2) He had made the flight in a second-hand machine; (3) He had not experienced any serious mishap; and (4) He had made the distance with the third fastest time to his credit.⁵⁶

Parorangi Aerodrome played a role on other achievements of their time. For example, in January 1931, the trotting trainer, Mr C.S. Donald, decided to try to drive in a horse race in both Auckland and Christchurch on subsequent days. He drove at the Epsom Trotting Track in the seventh race of the day,

⁵⁰ 'A History of the Manawatu Aero Club', p.3

⁵¹ 'A History of the Manawatu Aero Club', p.3

⁵² *Feilding Star*, 28 March 1938, in *The Feilding Star scrapbook 1 March 1938 to 31 March 1939*: Feilding Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18534#idx22157>

⁵³ *NZ Herald*, 29 November 1930, p. 8(Supplement)

⁵⁴ *NZ Herald*, 9 December 1930, p. 10

⁵⁵ Airhistory.org.uk: 'Golden Years of Aviation' http://www.airhistory.org.uk/gy/reg_ZK-.html

⁵⁶ *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 11 December 1930, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 11 December 1930, p. 14; Feilding Library photo: PEO:in63: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/17551>

and then headed for the south-bound Limited Express, from which he disembarked at Feilding, at 6:30am. He then caught a taxi to Parorangi, and the plane (which had flown up from Christchurch to collect him) then took off at 7:15am, bound for Wigram Aerodrome. Then, after a bath at his home, he arrived at the Addington Trotting Track at 11:00am. This had been his first flight – and he had loved it. Furthermore, his horse (in the first race of the day) then won its race.⁵⁷

In other news, by February 1931, Feilding Aero Club's aforementioned plane that had stalled and crashed during take-off in December 1930, had been repaired and was anticipated to soon return from Auckland. The club would then resume training pupils. This finally came to pass in April 1931.⁵⁸

Throughout this time, the Feilding Aero Club was working toward obtaining its own grounds. Finally in 1934 (and following an art union that raised £4,700), the club purchased the land that is now the Taonui Airport. The former owner was Mr E. Clevely.⁵⁹ The *Evening Post* of 7 July 1934 duly reported that: *"The Feilding Aero Club has completed arrangements for the purchase of an 80-acre farm property opposite the Taonui railway station, on the Feilding-Bunnythorpe Road, for use as an aerodrome. The club has been using an area of land at Parorangi, near Cheltenham, but this land is not sufficiently convenient for flying purposes. The new site is within three miles of Feilding, and is considered to be highly suitable for aviation. Steps will be taken in the near future to have the ground put in order, and the hangar at the Parorangi field will be dismantled and taken to the new ground."*⁶⁰

In April 1935, the Defence Dept. arranged to spend a substantial sum to form the new aerodrome at Taonui, and this was expected to *"absorb the whole of the local relief workers for several months."*⁶¹

Meanwhile flying at Parorangi had been abandoned – apparently a while before the purchase of the land at Taonui.⁶² Possibly this related to the development of the Milson Aerodrome as a more developed alternative. However, clearly some planes and equipment remained at Parorangi.

The Last Phase of the Parorangi Aerodrome

The severe windstorm that crossed the Manawatu region on 2 February 1936 appears to have been the end of the aerodrome. The *Horowhenua Chronicle* of 3 February 1936 (p. 5) recorded the following under the headline: *"Aeroplanes wrecked at Feilding: Parorangi 'Drome Destroyed"*

"One of the most serious individual losses arising from yesterday's devastating wind storm was the destruction of two aeroplanes at the Feilding Aero Club's aerodrome at Parorangi. These planes, an Avro and a Spartan, were the property of Mr H. M. Oram, of Palmerston North, a pioneer of civil aviation in the Manawatu.

"The wind of hurricane force which covered the whole of the back country, swept across the Parorangi ground to take the small 'drome building of iron in its course, and exposed to its devastating might the two aeroplanes which had been considered safe and secure. Deprived of their protection from the elements, the machines were quickly tossed about as matchwood and in a very little time were complete wrecks. Offering little resistance to the wind, the machines came to pieces with fragments scattered in all directions.

⁵⁷ *Evening Post*, 2 January 1931, p. 8

⁵⁸ *NZ Herald*, 27 February 1931, p. 16, 16 April 1931, p. 3

⁵⁹ *Feilding Star*, 28 March 1938, in *The Feilding Star scrapbook 1 March 1938 to 31 March 1939*: Feilding Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18534#idx22157>

⁶⁰ *Evening Post*, 7 July 1934, p. 8

⁶¹ *NZ Herald*, 22 April 1935, p. 8

⁶² *Feilding Star*, 28 March 1938, in *The Feilding Star scrapbook 1 March 1938 to 31 March 1939*: Feilding Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18534#idx22157>

“News of the trouble was brought to Feilding by passing motorists, who had secured pieces of the wrecked ‘planes as mementos of the occasion. To those who saw the wrecked machines they presented a dismal sight and were seemingly damaged beyond repair.

“Mr D. C. Cullinane, president of the Feilding Aero Club, was communicated with and news of the unfortunate loss was passed on to Mr Oram by the ‘Times.’

“Mr Oram stated last evening that he valued the ‘planes at £1,000.”

It is not apparent just how much use was made of the Parorangi Aerodrome after the loss of the planes and the hangar. Possibly it gradually slipped back to usage solely by the Short family and their friends and relatives. Amongst these pilots was Mr B.V. Short - Bruce Short, the schoolboy who went for the first flight back in 1920, and who also built the concrete block for the windsock. In November 1936, he took a 96-year-old former Parorangi estate employee, Mr G. Fraser, on a 45-minute flight over the area, including over Parorangi. This was Fraser’s first flight, and the Awapuni Old Folks’ Home resident loved the experience.⁶³

Others who trained and flew at Parorangi went on more powerful planes, including Austin Hayward. He had his first flight there in an Avro 504K, and then went on to fly Spitfires in North Africa and Italy during WWII.⁶⁴

In November 1937, Milson Aerodrome Inc., Manawatu Aero Club, Feilding Aero Club and Levin Aero Club combined to form the Middle Districts Aero Club.⁶⁵ The world was moving on – even if the Parorangi Aerodrome was not.

The New Taonui Aerodrome

The Taonui Aerodrome was officially opened on 26 March 1938 before some 2,000 people and fifteen visiting aircraft - in addition to local planes. An extensive article published in the *Feilding Star*⁶⁶ charted the path to its establishment, and the various activities and entertainments of the day. They had hoped that Flight-Lieut. H.B. Burrell (*“an old boy of Feilding”*) would be present *“with a squadron of the latest Baffin air machines,”* but that had not been possible. The aerodrome was formally declared open by the Hon. J.G. Cobbe, acting for the Minister of Defence (Hon. F. Jones), with many of the various local dignitaries of the time also identified in the article. These included Messrs V.B. Short and E. Short (of Parorangi).

In thanking various people, the Mayor of Feilding Borough Council, Mr Collins, who was a foundation member of the Feilding Aero Club, commented on the difficulties the club went through in its early years due to lack of money and other reasons: *“In this connection the speaker paid tribute to the help rendered by Mr E. Short, and in fact the whole Short family, in placing their property at Parorangi at the club’s disposal. Here was erected the club’s first hangar, which was destroyed in the February storm two years ago...”*⁶⁷

⁶³ *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 24 November 1936, p. 4

⁶⁴ Brendon Deere, *Spitfire: Return to Flight* (Palmerston North, 2010), p. 228

⁶⁵ ‘A History of the Manawatu Aero Club’, p. 6

⁶⁶ *Feilding Star*, 28 March 1938, in *The Feilding Star scrapbook* 1 March 1938 to 31 March 1939: Feilding Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18534#idx22157>

⁶⁷ *Feilding Star*, 28 March 1938, in *The Feilding Star scrapbook* 1 March 1938 to 31 March 1939: Feilding Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18534#idx22157>

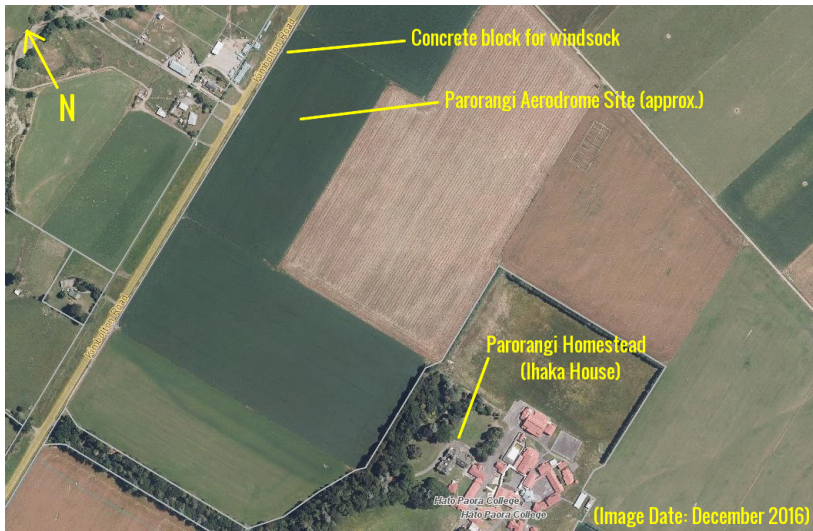


Figure 5 This satellite image of the former Parorangi Aerodrome site was taken in December 2016. It shows the Hato Paora College complex alongside the old Parorangi Homestead (latterly Ihaka House). The area indicated as probably being actual aerodrome site, is selected primarily because the concrete block is sited near it. The former location of the hangar is not yet clear, and the house shown in the background of one of the photos of the wrecked planes, appears to no longer be present to assist with pinpointing the site. Other earlier satellite photos of the paddock when newly-worked for cropping, also fail to show any odd markings that could suggest that a building might once have been on the site. (Source: Manawatu District Council: <http://maps.mdc.govt.nz/IntraMaps80/default.htm>)

In May 2007, the Hato Paora Trust Board sold the land where the concrete block – or plinth – stands and Riddlands Limited is now the owner of the property.⁶⁸

Comment

This little-known aerodrome was a very significant feature in the transport history of Manawatu and the wider region. The windsock base also represents something of the aviation technology of the time. Doubtless other written and oral history could expand on the finer points of this story, and some of this will surface when the local newspapers of the time become searchable electronically, such as through the website Papers Past.

⁶⁸ JJ Farms Ltd: <https://www.companiesoffice.govt.nz/companies/app/ui/pages/companies/1138661>; Email dated 13 March 2017, Rochelle Waugh (MDC) to Val Burr; Certificate of Title: WN31B/790 (1987)



Figure 6 The concrete block with the former aerodrome behind it. The trees in the distance surround Hato Paora College and the former Parorangi Homestead – photographed on 23 October 2016.

The death of Ernest Short's widow Jessie in February 1945, marked a turning point in the story of Parorangi. The contents of the huge house were auctioned off and then in February 1947, the property was sold to the Roman Catholic Church. In 1948, St. Paul's Maori Boys' College was opened there – this school subsequently being renamed Hato Paora College, which still occupies the site. The old homestead became Ihaka House.

In the latter 1990s, the Feilding & Districts Historical Society initiated the idea of placing a plaque onto the old windsock block, which appears to now be the only obvious remnant of the aerodrome still at the site. Dorothy Pilkington, who was a committee member on that society at the time, recalls that it had always stood on the same spot since her childhood – indicating that it probably has not been moved from elsewhere in the paddock at some point since construction. Dorothy recalls that the society had a struggle to convince Transit New Zealand to allow them to install the plaque at all. Then the Manawatu Branch Committee of the NZ Historic Places Trust, funded and installed the plaque. Dorothy thinks that this will have been in about 1997.⁶⁹

Another remnant of a different form, a hexagonal turret room protruding from the top of the Parorangi Homestead, was demolished as part of the house. This observation point was intended to allow Jessie Short to watch the local hunts galloping across the surrounding landscape. Doubtless it also allowed people to watch the skies whenever a plane was due to arrive at the aerodrome.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

As can be seen in Figure 6, the plinth is located on the edge of the road with large paddocks to the east and the former Parorangi Homestead to the south. The paddocks are flat, clearly an advantage for an aerodrome.

⁶⁹ Email: Dorothy Pilkington, Napier, 13 March 2017. The writer was present for some of the discussions re installing this plaque, and the date Dorothy suggests sounds about right.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2017 for this building is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The windsock base has **high regional** significance for **technological, rarity, people, events, pattern** and **educational** heritage values.

The concrete plinth has **high technological** values as the base of a fuel tank used to re-fuel planes and as a support for the wind-sock. It's likely that few, if any similar structures survive, suggesting it also has **high rarity** values.

The structure has **high associative** values with early pioneers of the Manawatu aviation industry who used the aerodrome from 1920. A number of these early pioneers were the children and in-laws of highly regarded local famers including Hugh Burrell and Ernest Short, on whose farm the land strip was constructed.

Events at the aerodrome included have **high historic** values including the first flight in the Manawatu in 1920, the origin of the first flight over Cook Strait piloted by a woman, was the end point of the first non-stop flight from Auckland and was a landing site of the England to Australia pilot Oscar Garden.

The aerodrome has **high pattern** values as it was the first in the Manawatu area and was used on a regular basis from 1928 to 1935. This was at the very beginnings of New Zealand's aviation history and was in use before the first New Zealand air force base was established at Wigram in 1923. The early pilots who used the aerodrome were typical of others in New Zealand most of whom were World War 1 pilots who wished to maintain their flying skills. This was encouraged by the government at the time who provided subsidies to aero clubs for this purpose.

Given that the history of the site has considerable significance in New Zealand's early aviation industry it also has **high educational** values.

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Thanks also to Dorothy Pilkington, Peter Short, John Bolton-Riley and Bruce Burr for their assistance with this report.

GLEN OROUA WAR MEMORIAL - 200 Sansons Road, Rongotea



Architect/builder: Not known

Construction date: 1921

Visible materials: Marble, concrete

Architectural style: Obelisk

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2018

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹²

A *Manawatu Times* article of 7 April 1921 described the unveiling of the memorial, in which it noted that despite the district only being 9 square miles and thinly populated it nevertheless saw 29 of its men enlist to fight in the First World War. The memorial commemorates all those who fought on one plaque and another with the six names of those who died and is located in front of the Glen Oroua School. As with many memorials throughout New Zealand, the location was to alert future generations of the sacrifice of those who served in the war.

The memorial was unveiled on 6 April 1921 by local MP Mr E Newman in the presence of members of the community and school staff and pupils. Other dignitaries who spoke included Lt-Col. J H White,

¹ Olsen, Peter, Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One, Memorials of the Manawatu District*, Janet Doyle, Feilding, 2015, page 30

² https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/MT19210407.2.57?end_date=31-12-1930&phrase=0&query=Glen+Oroua+memorial+unveiling&start_date=01-01-1914&title=FS%2CHC%2CMH%2CMS%2CMT%2CRAMA%2CTAIDT%2CWC%2CWH%2CWOODEX

DSO Chief of Staff Officer of the Wellington Military District, Rev B R White and Rev T Halliday. Mr B J Jacobs, president of the local branch of the Returned Soldiers' Association, was also in attendance.

The total cost of the memorial is unknown but the Dominion newspaper reported that £100 had been raised by 24 May 1919 for the erection of the memorial. It also reported that the Education Board had given its permission for the memorial to be built in the school grounds.

Plaques commemorating two who died in World War Two was added to the rear of the memorial.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises an obelisk with stepped and moulded marble pedestal. The plinth is of cement render lined out to imitate ashlar stonework and has four steps. The sides facing the school and the road have inscriptions.

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare³.

The location of the memorial is in the Glen Oroua School grounds on Sansons Road. There are several houses opposite and the immediate surroundings are flat farmland.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember those who died and those who served in both world wars.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it has been retained on its site and has no major alterations.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died and those who served in both world wars and where memorial services have been held.

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³ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

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Photographs



Figure 1: Glen Oroua War Memorial, R Waugh, 30 October 2022.

RANGIOTU WAR MEMORIAL – 1130 Rangiotu Road, Rangiotu



Architect/builder: Jones and Co, Palmerston North, Ike Cooksley snr. & the Rangiotu School boys

Construction date: 1921

Visible materials: Granite, concrete

Architectural style: Obelisk

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2016

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY¹

Introduction

For over ninety years, the Rangiotu War Memorial stood alongside the Rangiotu Post Office. From there it overlooked what was once a busy main road – which was then State Highway 56. However, now the road is just Rangiotu Road or ‘Highway 56’ - after the SH56 status was relocated. The memorial also overlooked the Foxton-Palmerston North railway line. However the railway closed in 1959, and then the Post Office also closed in c1983. The former Post Office building was duly sold to become a residence, with the memorial remaining on its lawn. Then in April 2015, the memorial was relocated about 200 metres to stand alongside the Rangiotu Memorial Hall.

¹ Olsen, Peter, Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One, Memorials of the Manawatu District*, Janet Doyle, Feilding, 2015

Building the Memorial

The land that was to accommodate the new Rangiotu Post Office and the war memorial, had been purchased by the Government from the Te Awe Awe family in 1918 for the sum of one shilling.² The Rangiotu Post & Telegraph Office was in due course officially opened on 27 June 1921.³



Figure 1 The Rangiotu War Memorial on its original site beside the former Rangiotu Post Office, probably in 2005. (Source: 'Rangiotu war memorial', <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiotu-war-memorial> [Ministry for Culture and Heritage])

Soon afterwards, the local Rangiotu and Baines communities combined to erect this war memorial, with fundraising being by public subscription. Unlike most war memorials of its type, this one was to not only name those from the area who had been killed, but it was also to name the many more who had returned. The local schoolchildren were also brought into the proceedings, with Mr Ike Cooksley snr. being assisted by a number of boys from the Rangiotu School, when they together built the memorial's base. Maren Dixon and Ngaire Watson's book, *A History of Rangiotu*, recorded that: "The concrete was mixed at the bottom of the hill and the boys had the task of carrying the concrete by bucket up to the site, forming a chain gang to do so."⁴

The Unveiling

The War Memorial was duly unveiled on 17

October 1921. Both local newspapers covered the unveiling in detail, albeit that the two reporters present picked up on different aspects of the story. For example, on the same day as the unveiling, the *Manawatu Standard* hastily recorded its account of the event – and key parts of it are presented here:

"Some time ago it was decided to erect, in the Rangiotu district, a war memorial by public subscription and the result is a very fine obelisk of gray granite, which has been placed in front of the new post office. The unveiling ceremony was performed to-day in the presence of a large gathering of settlers and school children by Major P. H. Bell, D. S.O., of the Defence Headquarters, Palmerston North, who was for some time adjutant at the Rifle Brigade camp at Rangiotu⁵, and through whose hands a number of local trainees passed.

² Maren Dixon & Ngaire Watson (eds.), *A History of Rangiotu* (Palmerston North, 1983), p. 23

³ Dixon & Watson, p. 38

⁴ Dixon & Watson, p. 53

⁵ The Rangiotu Military Camp operated from July 1915 to late 1916 (Ref: *Manawatu Standard*, 15 November 1916, p. 5; and 'Rangiotu Army Camp' – Manawatu Heritage: <https://manawatuheritage.pncc.govt.nz/item/fe6d1f8e-e7c8-4158-8d23-be3a8ac9fd1a>)

The *Manawatu Standard* then added that in his speech, the chairman of the memorial committee, Mr J.H. Simmonds, had also made a point of stating that the school children had helped to lay the memorial's foundation.⁶

The following morning the *Manawatu Times* published a more detailed account of the event under the headline: 'War Memorial: Unveiled at Rangiotu':



Figure 2 The former Rangiotu Post Office – at 1158 Rangiotu Road - with the concrete block that held the war memorial between 1921 and 2015, shown on the hilltop to the left of the photo. Google Streetview took this photograph in April 2015 – evidently between the 7th and 25th of April, as the memorial had been removed from this site, but correspondingly the Anzac Day wreaths had not yet appeared in the photo taken at the new site. (This image was screenshot on 18 January 2017)

“Few districts can boast a better record in the number of men sent to the 1914-18 war than Rangiotu. This is, indeed, a small district, yet it was able to swell the ranks by 73 men, of which number 14 made the supreme sacrifice. As in other parts of the country, the settlers, desirous of perpetuating the memory of those who went from their district, formed a committee with the object of, establishing a fund for the erection of a war memorial. So generous was the

response that, in but a short time, sufficient money was received and the construction of the memorial proceeded with. It has taken the form of a column of Scotch granite, rising from a substantial base. The memorial stands on a prominence, in front of Rangiotu's new post office. Despite the boisterous weather which prevailed yesterday, a large crowd gathered at noon to take part in the unveiling ceremony, which was performed by Major Bell, D.S.O., of the Defence Headquarters, Palmerston North....”

“Mr H. J. Simmons, chairman of the (memorial committee, referred) to the splendid response made by the district to the call for men. On a pro rata basis, they had sent as many, and in some cases, more than other parts. It was a trying period, but those who could not go did their best to fill the places of the boys, and also make the lot of those away as easy as it was at all possible for them to do. The settlers of the district considered they would be failing in their duty if a memorial was not erected in the men's honour—men who had nobly performed their duty to their country and the Empire. Children, in years to come, who passed along would read the names engraved on the memorial, and would probably be given food for thought. Mr Simmons then called on Major Bell to address the gathering and unveil the memorial.

“Major Bell said that this memorial, like hundreds of others that had been erected all over New Zealand, would serve a three-fold purpose. Firstly, it would remind the wives, mothers and children of the men who made the supreme sacrifice, though it was not altogether with sadness that we remembered those men. This memorial should remind us rather that they were the glorious dead. They had given up everything to do their duty, had died nobly, and their lives were complete. Secondly, the memorial would give the satisfaction of knowing that the people at home also did their duty to the men who went away. Any returned man who was present would know what was meant by 'mail day' in the field, and how eager they were to hear from the folks at home. The men realised that their people were doing their bit to keep up the spirits of those in the fields of battle. Thirdly,

⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 17 October 1921, p. 5

there were still widows and orphans and maimed men in New Zealand to be cared for. In this connection Major Bell pointed out that the R.S.A. was a very strong body of earnest men, whose main object was to see that the country looked after the interests of the dependants and the men. He would not deny that there was a lot of 'hot air' spoken by people who styled themselves returned soldiers. They might be —but, there was the official returned man who was out to do everything possible in the interests of their comrades and the dependants. Major Bell urged his hearers, particularly the men who had not yet joined the R.S.A., to accord their utmost support to that body. It was a pathetic business visiting the various soldiers' hospitals and sanatoria, wherein there were men who were trying to get cured of wounds and disease. It was going to take a long time for us to repay those men for all they had suffered in our behalf. Passing on, Major Bell pointed out that this memorial stood on a main roadside, and would remind everybody who passed along what this district had done, and that the people were determined not to let the younger generation forget that the men who had given up everything had done their duty.

"Major Bell then unveiled the memorial, and the 'Last Post' was sounded by Corporal G. H. H. Adams..."

"Mr I. C. Cooksley added a word of praise to the parents and relatives of the boys. He also thanked the school children who had assisted in the erection of the memorial. The ceremony was concluded with the singing of the National Anthem.

"The names engraved on the memorial are as follow: —

"Died: Sergt. S. Russell; Troopers A. H. Corlett, F. Corlett and P. Costello; Riflemen L. J. Healey, G. W. Dodds and C. T. Scadden; Privates J. J. Cook, F. Godfrey, J. Glendinning, S. M. Hall, W. Ireland, G. Wright and H. J. Thompson.

"Returned: Lieutenant D. G. Moore; Second-Lieut. J. F. Riches; Sergt-Major L. Galbraith; Sergts. W. E. Cooksley, D.C.M., M.M., R. H. Day, W. A. Cook; Corporals C. V. Jewell, S. S. McCullum; Lance-Corporals J. J. Waller, Gunner F. Mills, Trooper H. Jewell, Riflemen A. A. N. Alsop, J. E. Hall, T. J. Kerrison, B. F. Robin, J. Rei, C. E. Simmons and B. G. Waller, Privates H. J. Chapman, H. Cooksley, T. J. Cook, J. H. Dewis, I. Donaldson, H. Devonshire, P. Dennam, F. Evans, A. Gibbs, G. Gimblett, J. Hill, Jas. Hill, A. Healey, B. Healey, R. A. Ingley, F. Little, P. Cameron, C. H. Cook, D. C. Cook, R. Glendinning, J. E. Lucas, R. Paid, J. S. H. Alsop, A. Anderson, J. Bugg, F. J. Long, J. P. Morecombe, A. Munn, J. Palliser, J. W. Peers, S. Pearce, H. J. Sandle, A. C. Seaton, R. Seaton, C. Spry, W. J. D. Spry, J. Smith, A. J. H. White, G. Wilson, G. Wilton and G. Young.⁷



Figure 3 Bill Devonshire laying a poppy on the Rangiotu War Memorial in memory of his father, Arthur Devonshire, on Anzac Day, 25 April 2013. (Photo: *Manawatu Standard*, 26 April 2013)

Following the Second World War, the names of the fifty people from the district who had served in that war, were recorded in a Roll of Honour Board that is on display at the Rangiotu Memorial Hall. Of this number, two were killed, and seven were wounded.⁸

The Relocation

The location of the memorial became an issue after the closure of the Rangiotu Post Office in late 1983 or early 1984.⁹ The building

⁷ *Manawatu Times*, 18 October 1921, p. 7 (abridged slightly)

⁸ Dixon & Watson, p. 111. The WWI names on the war memorial are also listed there – on pages 109 and 110.

⁹ The date of Rangiotu Post Office's closure was not researched further. However, indexing of the *Manawatu Standard* indicates that it occurred between August 1983, when the community was attempting to keep it open, and July 1984 when

was then sold for conversion to a residence, with, the writer understands, the property being sold back to the Te Awe Awe family, who had originally owned the site. Thus the memorial was able to remain in situ.



Figure 4 This photo was taken at the war memorial's rededication ceremony - held on 25 April 2015 as part of Rangiotu's Anzac Day ceremony. The sentries are ATC cadets from one of the two local ATC cadet corps. The flag pole was already in this location – although photos show that it had been moved about a metre to accommodate the memorial. ('Rangiotu Memorial Hall Events' Facebook page:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=978028988895070&id=855142297850407)

The Rangiotu community had begun holding its own Anzac Day service in 1936. Typically they held the service in the Rangiotu Memorial Hall, before parading the short distance to the war memorial beside the post office. After a wreath-laying and the playing of the Last Post, they would head back to the hall for a community morning tea and to catch up with old friends.¹⁰ When the settlement's last WWII veteran died, the locals met and decided to carry on holding their own Anzac Day commemoration – something deemed all the more important because their school and post office had closed and businesses had moved away. Typically some 40 to 50 people were attending the mid-morning ceremonies as at 2013.¹¹

In 2012, the memorial was cleaned up by Alan Horsfall.¹² However, its new improved appearance was shattered when the top of the memorial fell during the 6.2M 'Eketahuna earthquake' that occurred on Wellington Anniversary Day, 20 January 2014.¹³

The Facebook page 'Rangiotu Memorial Hall Events,' records that the war memorial was relocated down the road to its new site alongside the hall, on 7 April 2015. Comments made under the post on the relocation, recorded that this was a good move for the memorial, however, the people were going to miss the annual walk from the hall to the memorial and back. It was duly re-dedicated as part of the Anzac Day commemorations on 25th April of that year.¹⁴

the unused building was to be 'disposed of.' (Ref: *Manawatu Standard*, 31 August 1983, p. 1 and 27 July 1984, p. 4). The records relating to this post office listed on Archives NZ's website www.archway.archives.govt.nz also support this.

¹⁰ *Manawatu Standard*, 20 April 2011, p. T10: 'Tradition Maintained'

¹¹ *Manawatu Standard*, 26 April 2013, 'A good ol' country service: Then there's a morning tea with 'all the trimmings'

¹² *Feilding Herald*, 4 October 2012, p. 8

¹³ Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014), p. 51

¹⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 24 April 2015

The memorial's old concrete base, which was created in 1921 with the assistance of the boys from Rangiotu School, remains on its original site, on the lawn of the former Rangiotu Post Office. In itself,



Figure 5 the original plinth and name of the building, photo Ian Bowman, 2 November 2016

the community involvement of the school children in 1921 makes the base alongside the former Post Office, significant in its own right.

Architect

Based on the inscription on the remains of the plinth in the original location, it is possible the designer of the memorial was Jones and Co of Palmerston North.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises an obelisk of Scottish granite¹⁵ with stepped, chamfered granite pedestal. The original plinth is of cement render and has four steps, the topmost is chamfered.

Names of soldiers who died, who were wounded and who returned are inscribed on the two lower steps of the pedestal while on the shaft of the obelisk there are crossed rifles and inscriptions. On the north face is

“For
Freedom
And justice”
And on the west face are crossed flags and
“IN MEMORIAM
THE SOLDIERS FROM THE
RANGIOTU DISTRICT
WHO FELL DURING
THE GREAT WAR
1914-1918

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most

¹⁵ <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/MT19211018.2.66?query=rangiotu%20war%20memorial>

common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare¹⁶.

Its new location is outside the Rangiotu Memorial Hall on the main road several hundred metres to the west of the original location. A timber flagpole is located to the immediate west of the memorial. Farms surround both sites with the Manawatu River to the east.

REVIEW OF REPORT

Based on a review of the report and viewing of Council files, the assessment undertaken in 2016 for this building is still applicable as at April 2021.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War 1.

The memorial has **low authenticity** as it has been relocated and separated from its base.

The memorial has **high historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in World War 1 and where memorial services have been held.

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Manawatu Standard (Hard copy, as per footnotes)

Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

Online Sources

Archives NZ's website: www.archway.archives.govt.nz (Search words: 'Rangiotu Post Office' & 'Rangiotu Memorial') Note that these files were not sighted for this study.

Google Streetview: www.google.co.nz (as per footnote)

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Manawatu Standard, Manawatu Times* - as per footnotes and text)

'Rangiotu Memorial Hall Events' Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Rangiotu-Memorial-Hall-Events-855142297850407/?fref=ts>

¹⁶ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

'Rangiotu war memorial': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiotu-war-memorial> (Ministry for Culture and Heritage)

Hiwinui War Memorial, Hiwinui School, 198 Watershed Road



Architect:	Unknown
Builder:	Jones & Co., PN
Construction Date:	1919
Visible materials:	Painted concrete stepped base, marble or granite stepped plinth and obelisk
Architectural Style:	Obelisk
Use/Building Type:	Memorial
Date and Compiler:	Ian Bowman, 2020, Val Burr 2019
Heritage NZ No:	Nil
Proposed category:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Hiwinui's war memorial, which is located in the grounds of Hiwinui School, was unveiled in 1919. Its inscription reads: *"For King and Country, For Freedom and Justice. All Honour give to those who nobly striving nobly fell that we might live. Erected in Honour of the Boys who attended the Hiwinui School and who Served in the Great War 1914-1919."* Additional names were added to it after WWII.

Proposed Shared Memorial for Bunnythorpe and Hiwinui

The earliest information located relating to planning the construction of a war memorial for Hiwinui, refers to a public meeting that was to be held at the Bunnythorpe Library at 8:00pm on February 28th, 1919. The meeting aimed to choose a suitable memorial for the local soldiers of the Bunnythorpe and Hiwinui districts, and the conveners of the meeting were Mr Jas. Henson, Mr Las Lassen, Mr W. Maxwell, Mr J. Thomas, and Mr R. Currie.¹

Several months later, the *Manawatu Standard* of 6 May 1919 referred to the progress on that memorial: *“At a special meeting of the Memorial Committee important business was dealt with, and it was decided to place before a public meeting on Friday evening a report of the work done, with a number of suggestions of means to commemorate the deeds of the soldiers who have given their lives for their country.”*² This public meeting for Bunnythorpe and Hiwinui residents was duly held at the Bunnythorpe Public Hall on Friday, February 9th, and its aim was to consider the suggestions from the Soldiers’ Memorial Committee.³ While the outcome of the meeting appears not to have been reported in the newspapers, both Bunnythorpe and Hiwinui each ended up with their own war memorials.

The Hiwinui School Memorial

The school’s history book *Hiwinui: 1891-1991* (p. 12) states that in July 1919, a public meeting held at the school decided to erect a granite memorial stone as a Roll of Honour. The residents then laid down the foundations during November, and a monumental mason from Palmerston North (Jones & Co.) then erected the stone.

The *Manawatu Standard* of 5 December 1919 then takes up the story - reporting that: *“For some time past a committee of residents of the Hiwinui district have been busily employed with the erection in the school grounds of a suitable and worthy memorial and roll of honour to perpetuate the services and sacrifices of all those boys who at any time attended Hiwinui school, and who served in the great war. The necessary arrangements having been fully completed, the stone will be unveiled on Sunday, the 14th December, at 2:15 p.m., Col. C. W. Melvill, C.B., having kindly consented to perform the ceremony. It is hoped that all who are interested in the district will endeavour to be present to assist the committee in making the ceremony worthy of the object. The Feilding Salvation Army Band have generously agreed to provide suitable music for the occasion.”*⁴

The *Manawatu Standard* of 10 December 1919 (p. 4), in reminding readers of the upcoming unveiling, added that seven old boys from the school gave their lives – two at Gallipoli, one in Egypt and four in France. Also, of the twenty-one who had left with various reinforcements, fifteen had been wounded.

The *Manawatu Times* of 15 December 1919 (p. 5) published a detailed account of the ceremony:

An interesting and impressive ceremony took place in the Hiwinui schoolgrounds yesterday when a memorial stone and roll of honour of the boys who attended the Hiwinui school and who had served in the war was unveiled. The arrangements were in the hands of a memorial committee who had no trouble in raising the necessary funds to secure the memorial, which is in the form of a column in grey marble inscribed with the names of the men who had passed through the school and who had afterwards served at the front. There (were) a large number of people present and the ceremony was conducted by Rev. W. Gatman, with the assistance of the Feilding Salvation Army Band.

The service opened with the singing of the National Anthem, followed by a prayer from Rev. Gatman. The grand old hymn, “God of Our Fathers,” was then sung, after which Mr Gatman called upon Mr D. P. Thurston, one of the school’s old masters, to deliver an address.

¹ *Manawatu Times*, 22 February 1919, p. 1(1)

² *Manawatu Standard*, 6 May 1919, p. 3

³ *Manawatu Standard*, 8 May 1919, p. 1

⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 5 December 1919, p. 4

Mr Thurston traversed briefly the events leading up to the Kaiser's bid for power. That part of the history, he said, was old and perhaps we would like to forget it, but we did not wish to forget how the men of the Empire responded to the appeal of the British statesmen. Referring to the school district's response to the call, he spoke proudly of the number who had gone. Over 28 of the young lads went away and of this number seven had made the supreme sacrifice, while of the others all except six were wounded. "These are my boys," concluded the speaker; "they are the lads I taught, they are the lads I played with; they are the lads I licked. In spite of this, or rather I should say because of this, I thank you for the privilege you have granted me to-day. It is an honour which I appreciate and for which I shall for ever be grateful."

Brigadier-General C. W. Melville, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., was then asked to unveil the memorial. He thanked them for the privilege of being asked to unveil the memorial. He had been astonished to learn the large number of men who had left from the Hiwinui district. The speaker paid a tribute to the men who had fallen. The number who were wounded showed that the men of the district had proved that their ardour was equal to their patriotism. He remembered the last time he had heard the hymn "God of Our Fathers," in Westminster Abbey, when a Dominion memorial service was being held. It was a solemn and awe-inspiring occasion and he felt that nobody who was there would forget it; even as they would not forget the present occasion. The memorial would stand for all time as an example for the younger lads of the district to look up to and follow.

The General then unveiled the memorial while the band played the "Dead March in Saul." The ceremony was concluded by the sounding of the "Last Post. The names of the men inscribed on the tablet were: —In memoriam; P. Argyle, L. Argyle, E. V. Brown, E. S. Entwisle, A. H. Greenhow and J. P. Thomas. Returned: G. A. Brown, C. Rowling, A. Geruschkat, S. T. Brown, E. Kelsall, H. N. Suisted, A. E. Brown, M. M. Tierney, F. W. Bassett, A. Nissen, H. W. Shepherd, S. J. E. Fowler, F. J. Moffat, E. W. Hills, N. H. Greenhow, E. A. Hockly, E. C. Olssen, E. Heneghan, A. Kelsall, G. Redshaw and R. R. Hockly.

After the ceremony afternoon tea was provided by the committee and served by the ladies of the district.⁵

The school's history book *Hiwinui: 1891-1991* (p. 11) indicates that P. Argyle and L. Argyle, were the brothers Percy and Len Argyle. Both were killed in action at Chunuk Bair on 8 August 1915, aged 25 and 21 respectively. A third brother, Leslie Lyndsay Argyle, served in WWII, however, although he also attended the school - and survived that war - his name does not appear with the other WWII returnees listed on the memorial.⁶

In fact the memorial had still not been fully paid for at this time, and in 1921 dances and card parties were held at the school to raise money to cover its cost. The teacher, Mr McNaughton, played for the dancing to save money.⁷

Between the Wars

Some information is available on subsequent activities involving the memorial. For example, the *Manawatu Times* of 26 April 1926 (p. 8) recorded the various Anzac Day services around the district, including: "At Hiwinui. Rev. M. A. Rugby Pratt also conducted a short commemorative service at Hiwinui in the afternoon, making reference to the historic landing at Gallipoli and to the sacrifices made in other blood-soaked fields..."

The *Manawatu Standard* of 26 April 1926 (p. 4) then expanded on the same event:

⁵ *Manawatu Times*, 15 December 1919, p. 5

⁶ Dorothy Kilsby, & Colin Capill, *Hiwinui: 1891-1991* (Palmerston North, 1991), p. 11; Auckland Museum, Online Cenotaph Database: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph> (then search their names: Percival Argyle, Leonard Charles Argyle, & Leslie Lyndsay Argyle)

⁷ Kilsby, p. 14

At Hiwinui public school yesterday afternoon the Rev. M. A. Rugby Pratt conducted a special service which was well attended. In the course of his address Mr Pratt said they had met to declare that they had not forgotten, nor would they forget, the men who had made the name "Anzac" to be the wonder and pride of the race. The sacrifices made on far fields reminded us of the incalculable cost of our rich civilisation. It was ours to uphold the great traditions others had created. Solemn duties lay at our door. We owed something to our own land. If it was to fulfil a worthy destiny its citizens must be faithful to God and to right, steadfast in sacrifice and resolute in the face of difficulty. In concluding his address the speaker said:

"Let us resolve — "To steel our hearts against the lust of ease, To find our welfare in the common good, To hold together, merging all degrees in one wide brotherhood; To teach that he who saves himself is lost, To bear in silence though our hearts may bleed, To spend ourselves and never count the cost For others' greater need."

*Only by manifesting such a spirit would they be worthy of the Anzac men and would they lead this land to fulfilment of its fairest promise.*⁸

The Second World War names

"Several years"⁹ after the Second World War, more names were added to the memorial. This included the names of four men who were killed in action, and a further fifteen who returned. While the places of death of the World War One men who died are recorded on the memorial, those who died in World War Two were not similarly described. The following, therefore, are their places of death:¹⁰

- Lance Corporal Leonard Harold Astwood, KIA 15 September 1944, aged 24 – Italy
- Private John Bassett, KIA, 20 May 1941, aged 20 – Crete
- Flight Sergeant Norman Henry Maul, KIA 23 February 1943, aged 22 - India
- Private Noel Birdwood Osborne, DOW 30 December 1943, aged 26 - Italy

Hiwinui School had a roll of 144 pupils as at 1 July 2018,¹¹ and the prominently placed memorial still features in the school's activities around Anzac Day.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises an obelisk of granite with two painted concrete steps and a chamfered painted concrete pedestal. The obelisk is stepped and is of grey marble/granite.

The names of the six Hiwinui soldiers killed and 21 returned soldiers are inscribed on the faces of the obelisk. The names of four men killed and fifteen men who returned in World War Two were added to the memorial several years after World War Two.

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare¹².

⁸ *Manawatu Standard*, 26 April 1926, p. 4

⁹ Kilsby, p. 18

¹⁰ Auckland Museum, Online Cenotaph Database: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph> (then search their names); Also: Kilsby, p. 45

¹¹ 'Hiwinui School', Education Counts: <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/find-school/school/population/year?district=®ion=&school=2364>

¹² <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

The memorial is located in the Hiwinui School grounds, which is sited on the corner of Melford Lane and Watershed Road and opposite Reid Line East. The memorial is located on the Watershed Road side of the school grounds.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, authenticity, group** and **moderate people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as typical of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as, unlike many war memorials, it has been retained on its original site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in Hiwinui in two world wars. It is also sited in a school, a common location intended to inspire the students with the sacrifice of those who died serving their country.

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IMAGES



Figure 1: The brothers Percival (left) and Leonard Charles Argyle, who were both killed on Chunuk Bair on 8 August 1915, and whose names appear on the war memorial¹³

¹³ Auckland Museum, Online Cenotaph Database: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph> (then search their names)

Ohakea War Memorial, 355 Speedy Road (cnr Tangimoana and Speedy Road), Ohakea



Figure 1: The Ohakea War Memorial, photographed on 7 October 2013, by 'JanetD2006': <https://www.flickr.com/photos/archivechick/40706254635>

Architect:	Unknown
Builder:	Unknown
Construction Date:	1920 (relocated 1996)
Visible materials:	Concrete stepped base, stepped and chamfered granite plinth and shaft
Architectural Style:	Obelisk
Use/Building Type:	Memorial
Date and Compiler:	Ian Bowman, 2020, Val Burr 2019
Heritage NZ No:	Nil
Proposed ranking:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The planning that led to the construction of this monument can be charted through a series of advertisements for public meetings held in the Ohakea district in 1919 and 1920. A possible contributor to the idea was a decision in late May or early June 1919 by the 'Bulls, Sanson, Carnavon, Ohakea and Lower Rangitikei War Relief Fund' to erect a permanent memorial to the soldiers of the district who had "*served their country in the Great War.*" The organisers were trying to compile lists

of names of the people from these districts, who had served in the war, and they proposed to call public meetings in Sanson and Bulls respectively to decide on the form the memorial should take.¹

The earliest public meeting relating to a memorial specifically for Ohakea, appeared in the *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus* two months later on 19 August 1919. It consisted of a notice reading: "A public meeting will be held in the Hall, Ohakea, on Thursday, 21st August, at 8pm, to arrange for the erection of a suitable War Memorial at Ohakea. A full attendance is requested. – F. Gabites, Sec. pro tem."²

Subsequent advertisements refer to F. Gabites as the "Hon. Sec." (Honourable Secretary) of the project. He was in fact the head teacher at Ohakea School, and at the time of a farewell function for him and his family in January 1920, he had been the head teacher at the school for fifteen years.³ Clearly he will have taught some of the young men named on the memorial.

The *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus* of 20 September 1919 (p. 8) then advertised a meeting to be held at the Ohakea Hall at 8pm on Tuesday, September 23rd 1919. All of those interested were invited to attend. The same newspaper subsequently reported that: "A big representative meeting of Ohakea settlers was held on Tuesday evening. Mr A. Sanson presided, and it was reported that the canvas for subscriptions for a memorial for fallen soldiers had met with a splendid response. It was decided that a memorial stone be erected in the school grounds, and that an Honours Board be placed in the schoolroom."⁴

Subsequent meetings were then held on the subject on October 14th 1919,⁵ and then on January 20th 1920,⁶ before finally the "imposing marble obelisk on the ground in front of the school was dedicated⁷ on Sunday, 14 November 1920. The following day the *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus* published an extensive article on the unveiling and on the speeches of the people who led the service. The following are some extracts from that article (minus the religious portion), which was entitled 'Ohakea honours her Glorious Dead':

"Sunday, November 14th marked an epoch in the settlement of Ohakea, a settlement which though not large sent its full quota of men to do their bit in the greatest struggle of all time. In the pretty grounds fronting the school, the residents have erected an imposing memorial marble obelisk. The unveiling ceremony took place yesterday in the presence of a large gathering. Proceedings, which were most impressive, were conducted by Rev. F. S. Ramson..."

"...Mr E. Newman, M.P., then unveiled the monument and read the inscription "To the glory of God and in loving memory of Sergt. Roy J. Richardson, Trooper Jack C. Bailey, Privates Sydney Stokes, James O'Brien, John Giles, James Stokes, Robert Jarvie. Who died for their country in the Great War." An inscription on another panel read:—"In memoriam. To commemorate the ever lasting sacrifice of those brave lads from the Ohakea district who so gloriously died while assisting to defeat the enemies of their country on the battlefield - 1914-18. They have trodden the pathways that heroes and martyrs trod."

¹ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 2 June 1919, p. 8 (4)

² *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 19 August 1919, p. 8 (4)

³ *Manawatu Herald*, 17 January 1920, p. 2

⁴ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 25 September 1919, p. 4

⁵ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 13 October 1919, p. 8 (3)

⁶ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 15 January 1920, p. 8

⁷ *Feilding Star*, 16 November 1920, p. 2

“...The memorial was not much use to the present generation, which was not likely to forget. He (Newman) doubted if there was anyone whose character would not be affected by the war. The memorial would serve to remind future generations of what their fathers did to save the Empire and civilisation. The true memorial was in the hearts of the people in character. He believed their characters would be inspired by the memorial reminding them not only of what the boys from the district had done, but that all branches of the service, the Navy, Army, and Flying Corps, deserved honorable mention.”

“Mr J. E. Walker, Chairman (of the) Rangitikei Patriotic Committee, congratulated the residents on having raised such a splendid memorial to the memory of those men who fell in the Great War. He was pleased they erected something which would inspire. May they never forget what these men had done. If so the Empire was safe for ever.”⁸

The memorial, as unveiled, had the names of seven former pupils engraved on it. They were:

- Sgt. Roy Jennings Richardson (KIA, 2/8/1917, aged 21, Ypres, Belgium)
- Tpr. Jack Cameron Bailey (DOW, 9/6/1917, aged 20, France [possibly Messines])
- Pte. James Fawcett Stokes (KIA, 8/8/1915, aged 25, Chunuk Bair, Gallipoli)
- Pte. Sydney Herbert Stokes (KIA, 8/8/1915, aged 26, Chunuk Bair, Gallipoli)⁹
- Pte. Robert Jarvie (KIA, 24/8/1918, aged 37, Bapaume, France)
- Pte. James John O'Brien (KIA, 26/8/1918, aged 23. Bapaume, France)¹⁰
- Pte. Henry J. Giles. Not confirmed. He 'might' be Rfm. Henry Giles (74941) KIA Le Quesnoy, France, 4/11/1918, aged 32. He 'might' also be related (not a brother) to Allen James Giles, stepfather of the Stokes brothers. He is not known to the Giles family now living at Ohakea.¹¹

History of Ohakea School

Ohakea School stood at what is now the Ohakea Domain at 530 Tangimoana Road – around 500 metres from the war memorial's present site. It opened as Rangitoto School, on 22 March 1899 – so named after the Rangitoto Survey Block, where it was located. However, due to confusion over the school's name, the Wanganui Education Board officially renamed it 'Ohakea School' from 1 January 1901.¹²

⁸ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 15 November 1920 p. 5

⁹ The Stokes brothers' mother, Mrs Mary Ann Giles, of Ohakea, was their next of kin (Ref: *Evening Post*, 11 September 1915, p. 9). Their brother, Pte. Edward Ernest Stokes, left Egypt for a hospital in England on 7 September 1915. He was left blind in one eye, and partially blind in the other, due to a gunshot wound. (*Feilding Star*, 29 September 1915, p. 2; Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/> [Search their names]) The timing suggested that his injury possibly occurred at the same time as his two brothers were killed on Chunuk Bair, Gallipoli. Other information on the brothers from the Cenotaph website indicates that Sydney (5th Reinforcements) had been at Gallipoli only a few days, while Edward and James (3rd Reinforcements) had been there 'a while' – perhaps from the start of the campaign. The Army numbers of Edward and James indicate that they enlisted together. Another brother, Arthur Matthew Stokes (7th Reinforcements) embarked after Gallipoli was over and he survived the war apparently unscathed. He died in 1983, and Ernest died in 1981. Their remaining known brother, Robert William Stokes, appears not to have enlisted and he died in 1969. The four brothers who served are also named on the Sandon School Roll of Honour. (Refs include: Births, Deaths & Marriages online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> [Search their names under births and deaths])

¹⁰ This is possibly the correct (Lance-Corporal) James John O'Brien. He was born at Bulls, and later lived at Kelvin Grove, Palmerston North) Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/> [Search his name]

¹¹ Conversation with Murray Giles, Ohakea, 1 October 2018

¹² *Wanganui Chronicle*, 17 October 1900, p. 2

The first school roll numbered 45 pupils, and in 1927, when an article on the school's history was published in the *Manawatu Standard*, the roll consisted of 63 pupils. The head teachers who will have been active amongst the memorial's decision-makers where the school was concerned, were Mr F. Gabites who taught there between October 1904 and December 1919, and Mr L. Berry, who was head teacher between January 1920 and December 1923.¹³

Nothing has been located during this study relating to an official unveiling of some sort for the two additional names added to the memorial after WWII. These are:

- Sgt. Graham W. Richardson s/be 'Graham Ferner Richardson', but his birth was registered as 'Graham Ferner Wairaka Richardson' (DOW, 11/3/1944, Cassino, Italy, aged 36). His father, John Ferner Richardson, was the first cousin of Roy Jennings Richardson, whose name appears among the WWI casualties.¹⁴
- Pte. Leslie Lewis Murray (killed or died while a POW, 13/3/1945, Poland, aged 29 [captured Egypt, 1942])

Ohakea School celebrated its 50th Anniversary over the weekend of 22nd-24th April 1949, with some 200 former pupils gathering for the reunion, including some who had been first-day pupils. From once being an 80-pupil school with two teachers, it now had 27 pupils and one teacher. The children from the "Ohakea Air Station" were then attending a school at Bulls and the authorities at the Air Force base were pressuring the Wanganui Education Board to open a new school at the Air Force base and close the existing Ohakea School. This request was being strongly opposed by Mr W. Mudford, a member of the Wanganui Education Board: "*A school must serve the district in which it was situated and Ohakea had no connection with the school it was proposed to commence at the aerodrome, since it was apparent farming and aviation communities could have no common bond.*"¹⁵

Local resident, Bruce Kinloch (whose father was involved with shifting the memorial in 1996) recalls that the swimming pool was built by the local community in about 1956-57.

Ohakea School finally closed on December 13th 1969 - sixty-nine years after it opened. From the start of school in 1970, the children would be transported to Sanson School. At the time of the closure, there were three families that had included both first day pupils and also pupils at the school in 1969, these were the Bailey, Richardson and Masters families. Of these, the war memorial includes members of two of these families. A number of special events were planned for the final day of school there, including taking photos, a memorial service, afternoon tea and a final bell-ringing.¹⁶ Thereafter, all that would be left of the school were the buildings, the 12-year-old swimming baths and the war memorial. The swimming baths are still present at what is now set aside as a recreational reserve named the Ohakea Domain – however, the domain, which belongs to Manawatu District Council, is now leased out as a paddock. The schoolteacher's house at 530 Tangimoana Road is still present and privately owned, and it is surrounded by the Ohakea Domain land.

¹³ *Manawatu Standard*, 28 February 1927, p. 15(3)

¹⁴ Births, Deaths & Marriages online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> Refs: R.J. Richardson (1896/10510); son of G.W.J. Richardson (1858/5666), son of Thomas Turner Richardson and his wife Ann. Also G.F.W. Richardson (1907/16347), son of J.F. Richardson (birth rego. not found), son of T.F. Richardson (1852/3676), son of Thomas Turner Richardson and his wife Ann. J.F. Richardson's ancestry is retrieved through that of his sister, Erenora Ellery nee Richardson): https://www.myheritage.com/names/erenora_richardson

¹⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 26 April 1949, p. 3(4)

¹⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 4 December 1969, p. 12

The Ohakea Domain Board was established in 1972 and disestablished in 1985.¹⁷ The swimming baths have not been used for many years, however, the road sign reading 'Ohakea Domain' is still in place on the roadside. The original base is still present at the old site¹⁸, but is not clearly visible in photos sighted.

Relocating the Memorial

The memorial was relocated to its present site alongside the Ohakea War Memorial Hall in 1996. It was then re-dedicated on 11 May 1996, with new text to that effect also being engraved onto the memorial's base. However, there was already concern for its future at the new site. When reporting the event, the *Manawatu Standard* of 14 May 1996 (p. 2) stated that the local people were concerned that the then mayor of Manawatu District Council had been using the Ohakea War Memorial Hall as an example of some community halls in the district that might have to be closed because they were costly to maintain and underused.

However, the "*Organising committee member Elizabeth Kinloch said they had chosen the hall as it was the community's only meeting place since the school closed 30 years ago. She said the moving of the memorial had motivated locals to plant trees and clean and paint the hall, which was now being well-used. The move, which cost \$2,100, was organised by Sanson/Ohakea RSA chairman Dave Kinloch with donations and support from the committee, Manawatu District Council and Heritage Trust.*"¹⁹

In 2013, the memorial was repainted by Peter Olsen and a squad of soldiers, in the course of Peter Olsen's restoration project to clean and repair Manawatu's war memorials.²⁰

The Ohakea War Memorial Hall

The records held on the Ohakea War Memorial Hall by Manawatu District Council, reveal that the consent to erect it is dated 27 May 1953. It was built by R. Kemp, of Bulls, at a cost of £3,900.²¹ Minute Books and other records relating to this hall, and dating from 1953, are housed with the Manawatu District Council records held by Archives Central in Feilding.²²

In addition to having the Ohakea War Memorial now sited on its grounds, the Ohakea Roll of Honour board is also located in the hall. This lists the same nine names (both wars) as appear on the war memorial.²³

The Ohakea Honour Board photo collection at Te Manawa

There is no indication as to the fate (if it was made at all) of the honour board that was proposed in 1919 to be hung inside the school. However, Te Manawa, in Palmerston North, holds in its collection a set of three photo-collages of sixteen Ohakea residents who went to WWI.²⁴ One set of these contains six men who were lost during the war (although the identity of one man is not confirmed at

¹⁷ Ohakea Domain Board file: MDC 5.1.3, Archives Central, Feilding:

<http://archivescentral.org.nz/agencies/topics/show/83964-ohakea-domain-board>

¹⁸ Conversation with Bruce Kinloch, Ohakea, 1 October 2018

¹⁹ *Manawatu Standard*, 14 May 1996, p. 2

²⁰ Olsen & Doyle, p. 45

²¹ Manawatu District Council: Planning Dept. file: 'Ohakea War Memorial Hall', 355 Speedy Road, Ohakea

²² Archives Central (Manawatu District Council): http://archivescentral.org.nz/en/manawatu_dc (search words: 'Ohakea War Memorial Hall'). See also 'Ohakea War Memorial Hall':

http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Living_Leisure/Community_Facilities/Halls_and_Recreation_Complexes/Ohakea_War_Memorial_Hall

²³ Olsen & Doyle, p. 45

²⁴ Ohakea War Memorial photo-collage sets: Accession No's: 74/2/1, 74/2/2 & 71/2/3, Te Manawa, Palmerston North. Most of these men are identified, including five of the six men killed in the war – with the sixth possibly unidentified.

this stage) – and two of these men (Roy Richardson and Jack Bailey) are also listed on the war memorial.²⁵ The other two sets appear to be men who survived the war.

It is possible that these sets of photos formed the honour board that was being planned in 1919. However, it has not been possible to find any history to the set other than they were donated to Te Manawa on 1 February 1974 by the late Jack Bailey, of Richardsons Road, Ohakea, and that the men were Ohakea residents who had fought in WWI. If this is the planned honour board referred to in 1919, then the set were removed from the school's walls before the memory of the two locals contacted during this study. Why only two men are named on both this photo set and also the war memorial is another question – although the availability of photos may have been an issue when the honour board was set up. This set appears to have also included local residents who had not attended Ohakea School.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a granite obelisk, granite stepped and chamfered plinth and a stepped concrete base.

The names of seven men from WWI are inscribed on the memorial in addition to the other sentiments described above.

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare²⁶.

The memorial is located just back from the corner of Speedy and Tangimoana Road at the rear of the Ohakea Memorial Hall. A flagpole is further to the south. A carpark occupies the actual corner, while the remainder of the setting is flat, open farmland with few trees. The site is to the south of the Ohakea Air Base.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low to high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

²⁵ Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/> [Search his name]

²⁶ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One.

The memorial has **moderate authenticity** as it has been relocated from its original site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern** and **cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those from Ohakea who died in World War One and one that is sited in its own enclosure off an isolated rural road. In common with many memorials, it was originally located close to a school.

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[http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Living_Leisure/Community_Facilities/Halls_and_Recreation_Complexes/Ohakea War Memorial Hall](http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Living_Leisure/Community_Facilities/Halls_and_Recreation_Complexes/Ohakea_War_Memorial_Hall)

My Heritage: https://www.myheritage.com/names/erenora_richardson

New Zealand History; Ohakea War Memorial: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/ohakea-war-memorial> (Ministry of Culture and Heritage)

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers>: *Evening Post*, *Feilding Star*, *Manawatu Herald*, *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, *Wanganui Chronicle* [as per footnotes]

Other Sources

Manawatu District Council: Planning Dept. file: 'Ohakea War Memorial Hall', 355 Speedy Road, Ohakea Te Manawa, Palmerston North: WWI photos of Ohakea soldiers [as per footnotes]. Also Te Manawa staff-member Cindy Lilburn, who has previously researched the men named in the photos (not all names are known).

Conversations with Murray Giles and Bruce Kinloch, both of Ohakea, 1 October 2018.

IMAGES



Figure 2: The present and past sites of the Ohakea War Memorial that are some 500 metres apart – from a Google image.



Figure 3: This image shows the former Ohakea School site on Tangimoana Road, where the war memorial stood between 1920 and 1996. This land belongs to Manawatu District Council and is named the Ohakea Domain. The school building once stood at the far end of this driveway and the house on the site (obscure to the right of this photo) is the former teacher's house. The old school pool is in the distance. The original concrete base of the war memorial is still present in the scene shown in this photo, but it is not possible to be certain where it is in the Google Street View photos accessed here. (Source: Google Street View – April 2015, and Bruce Kinloch, 1 October 2018)



Figure 4: The 1996 rededication plaque on the Ohakea War Memorial Hall - in about 2005. Source: New Zealand History: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/ohakea-war-memorial>



Figure 5: The Ohakea War Memorial and hall in April 2015 (Source: Google Street View)



Figure 6: The inscription on the Roll of Honour located in the Ohakea War Memorial Hall, indicates that this is unlikely to be the honour board that was apparently planned in 1919 to be installed inside Ohakea School. Rather, the names showing here are copied from what was at the time the school's war memorial. (Source:

'JanetD2006', photographed on 17 February 2013:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/10523196@N08/26730171097>)



Figure 7: Ohakea WWI photos – now held at Te Manawa, Palmerston North. The three sets of photos, described as 'Ohakea Residents who fought in WWI,' were donated to Te Manawa by Jack Bailey, of Richardsons Road, Ohakea, on 1 February 1974. The men in the horizontal hanging collection (at left) appear to have all died during the war, and two of them are also on the Ohakea War Memorial as former pupils of Ohakea School. Meanwhile the men in the two vertical hanging collections (at right) seem to have survived the war – based on the fates of those whose names have been identified. (Te Manawa Accession No's: 74/2/1, 74/2/2 & 71/2/3)

Oroua Downs School War Memorial, 3 Lake Road, Himatangi

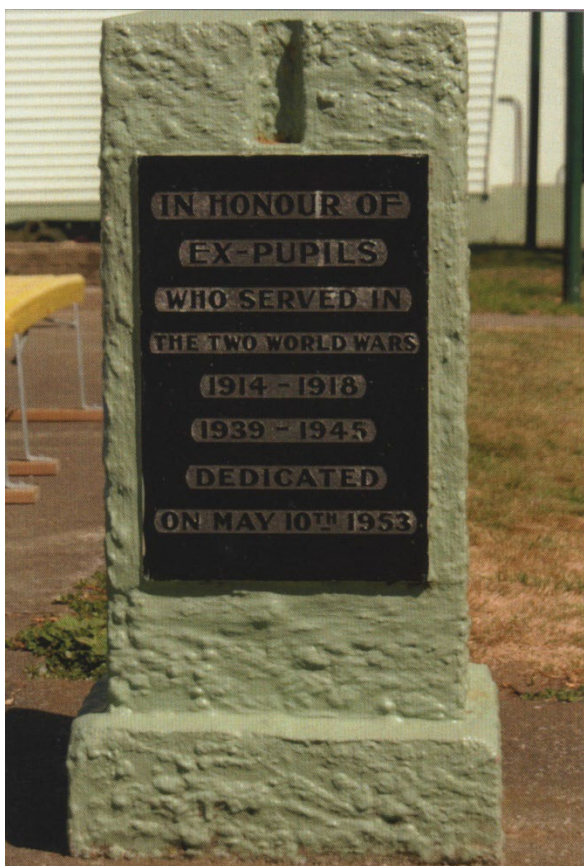


Figure 1 The Oroua Downs School war memorial at the base of the school's flag pole (Source, Olsen & Doyle, p. 47)

Architect:	Unknown
Builder:	Unknown
Construction Date:	1953
Visible materials:	Concrete plinth with granite plaque
Architectural style:	Flagpole base
Use/building type:	Monument
Date and Compiler:	Val Burr 2018, Ian Bowman, 2020
Heritage NZ listing:	Nil
Proposed ranking:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The original memorial commemorating Oroua Downs School's past pupils who had been lost during World War One, was a silver birch tree. The book *Oroua Downs School Golden Jubilee 1903-1953*, described this memorial: "Just after World War I a silver birch tree was planted in front of the school, as a memorial to those ex-pupils who lost their lives in that war. When the school was enlarged (in 1950), this tree was cut down to make way for the extensions. It was not realised by those responsible until too late the significance this tree had in the school's history..."¹

¹ Ernest William Thompson, *Oroua Downs School Golden Jubilee 1903-1953* (1953), p. 23

Unfortunately no contemporary newspaper or other reports of the c1918-19 planting ceremony that doubtless occurred, appear to have survived beyond the brief comments published in the school's several history publications decades later.²

Similarly, no indication was sighted during this study as to whether the school ever had an actual Roll of Honour board naming the specific ex-pupils being memorialised. However, the three-classroom school was completely destroyed by fire on 23 July 1936, and any wooden memorial of that nature would have been destroyed in the fire.³ Records of the school's early history were also lost in this fire.⁴

Oroua Downs School celebrated its first fifty years with a Golden Jubilee held on 9-11 May 1953, with over 400 former pupils, staff, committee members and guests participating in the event. In the course of this weekend, a black granite memorial plaque was unveiled on the base of the school's flagpole, to commemorate the school's dead of both wars. Its text reads: "*In Honour of ex-pupils who Served in the two World Wars 1914-1918 1939-1945. Dedicated on May 10th 1953*"

Some 200 people attended the unveiling at 11:00am on Sunday, 10th May 1953, in the course of a thanksgiving service conducted by the Rev. J.C. Ashworth and the Rev. H.G. Boniface. Music for the event was provided by the Foxton Silver Band.⁵ A detailed account of the event's Order of Service appears in the 1953 Golden Jubilee publication (pp. 59-62).

The names of the WWI ex-pupils the present memorial honours, are not identified in the publications sighted for this study, although, doubtless they are amongst those people recorded on the WWI Roll of Honour board at the nearby Oroua Downs Memorial Hall. However, the 1953 Golden Jubilee publication (p. 61) records the names of the three former pupils who were killed in WWII.⁶

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a concrete base to a flagpole in the grounds of the Oroua Downs School with a granite plaque with the inscription dedicated to pupils who served in WWI and WWII, as described above.

The school is located on the corner of Lake Road and State Highway 1, about 12 kilometres north of Foxton. The area is largely flat, rural farmland with few nearby buildings.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative and education values.

The memorial has **low architectural** and **technological** values as a very prosaic use of a flagpole base as a war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

² For example, Beth Hunt, *The Downs: History of Oroua Downs and District for the School Centenary* (Oroua Downs, 2003), p. 135

³ *Horowhenua Chronicle*, 23 July 1936, p. 4

⁴ 'About Us' on the Oroua Downs School website: http://orouadowns.school.nz/?page_id=16

⁵ Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014), p. 47; *Manawatu Standard*, 11 May 1953, p. 9; *Manawatu Times*, 11 May 1953, p. 5

⁶ Thompson, p. 61

The memorial has **low rarity** but **moderate representativeness** and **group** values as one of many memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it remains on its original site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern** and **cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in World Wars I and II. The flagpole and memorial are within school grounds.

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IMAGES



Figure 2 Unveiling the Oroua Downs School war memorial on 10 May 1953 (Source: '*Golden Jubilee Oroua Downs School*', p. 60. This copy: Olsen & Doyle, p. 47)



Figure 3 The flagpole and memorial at Oroua Downs School – in March 2014 (Source: Google Street View)

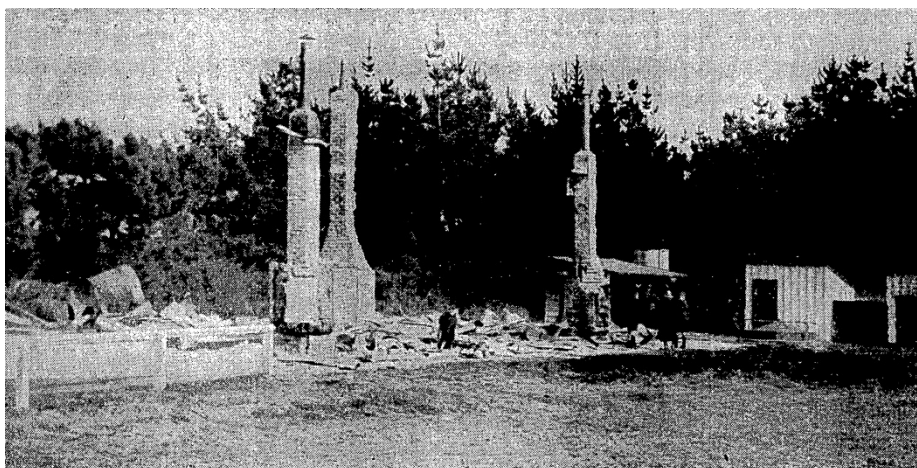


Figure 4 These are the remains of Oroua Downs School after the early morning fire of 23 July 1936 – as published in the *Evening Post* on 24 July 1936 (p. 7). All the school's records to that time were lost in this fire⁷, and presumably amongst these were lost the specific names of the WWI ex-pupils the school's memorial silver birch tree honoured. The background story of the tree itself was also largely lost – until it was removed in 1950, thus leading to the installation of the present memorial in 1953.

⁷ Hunt, p. 154



Figure 5 Oroua Downs School in January 2016. (Source: Manawatu District Council website: 'District Maps')

Rewa School War Memorial, Old School Reserve, 40 Rangitikei Valley Road, Rewa



Architect:

Builder:

Construction Date: 1920

Visible materials: Granite shaft and urn, concrete stepped base and plinth

Architectural style:

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Val Burr 2018, Ian Bowman, 2020

Heritage NZ Listing: Nil

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The Rewa School War Memorial lists the names for both wars of the school's dead former pupils and also those who returned. It was unveiled on 27 March 1920, and the names of the pupils who served in World War II were showing on the memorial at the time of the school's 50th Anniversary celebrations in 1946. Rewa School closed in about 1972, and the memorial remains as a key feature of what is now known as the 'Rewa Old School Reserve'. The memorial was restored in 2014.

The Unveiling Ceremony

The *Feilding Star* of 26 March 1920 records that: *"The residents of Rewa are determined to make the unveiling of the Soldiers' Memorial there to-morrow afternoon a function where all will be able to*

participate. The ceremony will commence at 2 p.m. and Messrs F. Pirani and O. A. Banner, of the Wanganui Education Board, have been asked to participate in the function, as well as local residents. It was intended that Mr Pirani should deliver his war lecture the same evening, but at his request that has been postponed till a later date.”¹

The unveiling ceremony, which began at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 27th 1920², was then described in the *Feilding Star* of 29 March 1920 (p. 2):

“Looking down on the settlement of Rewa, nestling on the southern bank of the Rangitikei River, beyond Waituna, one gets a delightful view of green sward, comfortable farmsteads, and the usual concomitants of a country township - church, school, - store, etc. - with the river beyond, terrace after terrace of farm land on the opposite bank, flanked by huge mountains and high ranges. In the midst of the settlement, however, is to be seen the show place of the district, the local school and grounds, which reflects the pride the residents must take in the education of their kiddies - for one sees trim, well-kept gardens, emerald green lawns, experimental plots, ornamental trees, large playgrounds, concrete paths, and nicely-painted buildings. While the crowning glory of it all is the handsomest monument we have yet seen in the Dominion to our girls and boys who went to the front - amidst a plot of closely-cut grass - evidence of the liberality with which the residents determined to perpetuate the memorial of the 27 scholars who had served their country so well.

“On Saturday, the residents, numbering more than 100, assembled to celebrate the unveiling of the memorial.

“The proceedings were in charge of Mr Watt, Chairman of the School Committee.

The Rev. Mr Evans, of Hunterville, delivered a short prayer, referring especially to the great crime of the war, and the hope that the peace would be a lasting one.

“Mr Watt spoke briefly, eulogising the great services performed by the Allies in stemming the overwhelming tide of the enemy’s forces, and eulogising the work of our people.

“Mr Fred Pirani delivered an address on the part our girls and boys had taken in the war, and referred in high terms to the great reputation they had earned amongst the people wherever their lot was cast, and the fact that they were able to stand - shoulder to shoulder with the best soldiers on the field. He thought the school was a most appropriate site for the memorial, as future generations would not only recognise the self-sacrifice of the local participants - but would always have before them the high value placed upon the services of New Zealand’s bravest daughters and sons. He then unveiled the memorial, and the audience sang the National Anthem.

“Mr O. A. Banner eulogised the action of the residents in placing such a handsome memorial in the midst of such appropriate surroundings.

“Mr Rees, headmaster of the school, and a returned soldier, heartily thanked all who had taken part in the ceremony, and spoke eulogistically of the liberal manner in which the residents of the district treated every returned soldier.

“Appetising refreshments were provided by the ladies of the district for everyone present, and proved most enjoyable.

“The memorial was a handsome polished granite column, set on two huge blocks of concrete, in the centre of a huge plot of grass. On two sides of the column the names of those who had gone to the front were cut. viz., those who had ‘gone West’ – Nurse Jamieson (drowned in the wreck of the hospital ship Marquette), Privs. W. Anderson, E. Crossman, E. Voght, A. Haycock, and Rifleman C. Hartley.

“And those who had returned: Sergt. R. Barrett, T. Luff, M.A.J. and A. Quinlan. Gunner J. Collins. W. Quinlan, Rifleman C. Clarke, H. Haycock, R. Rees, J. Wise, Priv. S.M. Alderson, S. Alderson, J. Hodson, E. Prizian, D. Penfold, W. Ritchie, P. Sedgwick, G. Thomas, and C. Vennell.

¹ *Feilding Star*, 26 March 1920, p. 2 Pirani duly delivered his illustrated lecture at Rewa, on his experiences at the Front, in England, and the voyage home, on 9th April 1920. – *Feilding Star*, 6 April 1920, p. 3.

² *Feilding Star*, 23 March 1920, p. 3 (6) Advertisement

“Inscribed on the memorial are the words: ‘Erected to honour the memory of our lads who served their country in the Great War.’”³

World War II

After the Second World War, another former pupil’s name was added to the Roll of Honour section of the memorial. This was Sgt/P. G.C. Jamieson. He was George Chowen Jamieson (NZ422067), a Flight Sergeant in the RNZAF, and the son of Thomas James Jamieson and his wife Lydia, nee Hartley, of Rewa. He was killed on active service on 14 March 1944, aged 26, and is buried in England. His mother’s brother was Stephen Charles Hartley and his father’s sister was Mabel Jamieson, both of whom are also listed on this memorial as a result of their deaths during the First World War. In addition, a further sixteen men are named on the memorial as having returned from the Second World War.⁴

Closure of Rewa School

Although not researched in any depth, the Archives NZ website ‘Archway’ lists eight assorted files held by that institution for Rewa School. These point to a closure date of approximately 1971-73.⁵ However, an article on the closure of Pohangina School in May 1972, refers to three other schools “*in the Pohangina Valley*” closing at the end of 1971, as part of the Government’s policy of consolidating small schools into larger units. Perhaps by some stretch of the location, this number might also have included Rewa School.⁶

Following the school’s closure, the school building has been used as a community hall, while the school’s other former facilities (toilets, swimming pool and tennis court) have also been used by the local community. Meanwhile the war memorial has remained as a feature of the ‘Rewa Old School Reserve’.⁷

The book *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District*, by Peter Olsen and Janet Doyle (p. 53), records that at some point - presumably since the school’s closure - the urn had been knocked off the top of the memorial. It had been struck by a branch from a tree when the surrounding trees were being trimmed. Then, after “*many years*” spent lying in a stone-mason’s yard in Whanganui, the urn was restored to its original place on the memorial in 2014.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial has a red granite, square column and single stepped pedestal with an urn, and a two stepped cement rendered concrete base. Inscriptions are incised into the granite column with the

³ *Feilding Star*, 29 March 1920, p. 2. Note that some minor misspelling in the article was corrected through viewing the memorial itself. Ref: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/report-an-image/c7647/6419> which relates to Nurse Mabel Elizabeth Jamieson

⁴ Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: ‘George Chowen Jamieson’:

<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C27153?n=NZ422067&ordinal=0&from=%2Fwar-memorial%2Fonline-cenotaph%2Fsearch%2F>

⁵ For example: School Subject Files – Rewa – Closing of Schools: R21914501 ABDV W3571 989 / 118/34 Text (1972-73); and School Subject Files – Rewa – History: R21914502 ABDV W3571 989 / 27/36 Text (1972) <https://www.archway.archives.govt.nz/> (and search ‘Rewa School’)

⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 5 May 1972, p. 1 ‘Pohangina School Closed Today’

⁷ Manawatu District Council: ‘Rewa Old School Reserve’:

http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Living_Leisure/Parks_and_Reserves/Reserves/Rewa_Old_School_Reserve; Also: *Manawatu Standard*, 10 July 2012: ‘Give unused schools to communities’: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/rural/central-districts-farmer/7251419/Give-unused-schools-to-communities>

names of 27 servicemen who were either killed or returned from the First World War and another name from the Second World War.

The urn symbolises death and rebirth while the column represents life or mortality. The more common broken column symbolises a life cut short.

The memorial is located close to Rangitikei Valley Road in the grounds of the Rewa school, the building and swimming pool still extant. The former school site is north of Beaconsfield between the Rangitikei River to the west and a small valley to the east. The area is rolling rural farmland.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an column and urn-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it has been retained on its original site with associated school buildings intact.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those from Rewa who died in World Wars One and Two. It is also sited within grounds of a former school, a common location intended to inspire students with the sacrifice of those who died serving their country.

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Manawatu Standard, 5 May 1972, p. 1 'Pohangina School Closed Today' [Microfilm at Palmerston North Central Library]

Manawatu Standard, 10 January 2004, p. 4, 'Back to School' [Microfilm at Palmerston North Central Library]
Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

Online Sources

Archives NZ Archway website: <https://www.archway.archives.govt.nz/> [Search 'Rewa School']

Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/> [Search the various people's names]; Also photos: 'Mabel Elizabeth Jamieson':

<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/report-an-image/c7647/6419> And:

<https://api.aucklandmuseum.com/id/media/public/c27b0854-2479-4c8e-9b09-4f6f6d298f95/original.jpeg>

Imperial War Museum: 'Mabel Elizabeth Jamieson':

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205380593>

Manawatu District Council: Rewa Old School Reserve:

http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Living_Leisure/Parks_and_Reserves/Reserves/Rewa_Old_School_Reserve

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Palmerston North Central Library: Rewa School 50-year anniversary – CA: Elmar Negative Collection – F400:
<https://manawatuheritage.pncc.govt.nz/item/e1026f9f-09ae-489d-9493-22ae1ce4ad7f>

Palmerston North Central Library: Rewa School 50-year anniversary – CA: Elmar Negative Collection – F406:
<https://manawatuheritage.pncc.govt.nz/item/a8778a82-1e79-4af0-ba4c-6ede95147a4a>
Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Feilding Star*): (as per footnotes and text)
Wikipedia: 'Mabel Jamieson': https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mabel_Jamieson



Figure 1: The names of the deceased of WWI and WWII shown on the Rewa School War Memorial (Source: Photographed by 'Wendy' on 11 July 2015: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/report-an-image/c7647/6419>)



Figure 2: Left: The memorial in 2014, after the urn had been reinstalled on the memorial the same year. This face shows the names of the returned servicemen from WWII. (Source: Olsen & Doyle, p. 53) **Right:** A closer view of the WWII returnees (Photographed by Wendy on 11 July 2015: <https://api.aucklandmuseum.com/id/media/public/c27b0854-2479-4c8e-9b09-4f6f6d298f95/original.jpeg>)



71. Rewa 1945. Standing at back: Jack Harre, Colin McDonald?, Murray Smith. Boys with rope: Left: Bill Quinlan, Right: Phil Vennell. Little ones in centre: Janet Newcombe, unknown, Robert Newcombe, unknown. Photo: Brian Hunter

DOROTHY Thompson at the war memorial in the Rewa School grounds.

Figure 3: Left: The memorial, with Rangitikei Valley Road beyond the fence. (Source: Olsen & Doyle, p. 53). **Right:** Former pupil Dorothy Thompson (nee Sowerby) photographed with the memorial in 2004 during a visit to her old school. (*Manawatu Standard*, 10 January 2004, p. 4, 'Back to School')



Figure 4: A scene from the 50th Anniversary celebrations at Rewa School in 1946, with the war memorial in the background. The face showing is the one listing the names of returned WWII servicemen, and perhaps these new names were unveiled at this event. (Source: Cropped from Photo: F400, Rewa School's 50th Anniversary, 1946: Palmerston North City Library)



Figure 5: Nurse Mabel Elizabeth Jamieson, the only woman listed on the Rewa School War Memorial, who was drowned on 23 October 1915.⁸ (Source: WWC H22-14, Imperial War Museum: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205380593>)

⁸ 'Mabel Jamieson', Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mabel_Jamieson

Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre Iron Gates, 1 Wye Street, Rongotea



Figure 1: The memorial gates in their present context – 2 December 2017

Architect:	Mr Barsanti
Builder:	J P Wilson
Construction Date:	1953
Visible materials:	Galvanised steel gates, 2 x granite plaques fixed to the 1999 building
Architectural Style:	
Use/building type:	Memorial gates
Date and compiler:	Val Burr 2018, Ian Bowman 2020
Heritage NZ Listing	Nil
Proposed ranking:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The memorial gates and plaques now at the Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre, were originally installed as part of the Rongotea War Memorial Hall complex that was officially opened on 18 March 1953. A surviving invitation to the event refers to the ‘Rongotea and Districts War Memorial’; to the unveiling of the memorial gates; and to the official opening of the recreation centre. The facility was duly opened by the Governor-General, Sir Willoughby Norrie.¹

The memorial gates themselves originally consisted of substantial gateposts that had plaques with the names of the soldiers who died in the two world wars, embedded in them. From these gateposts swung two steel gates that have the years “1914.18” and “1939.45” set into them. While the two gates themselves are still fulfilling their original role, the plaques are now built into the façade of the present building.

The Rongotea War Memorial Sports Centre

The gates and the building they once led to originated from a public meeting held on 19 October 1946, in the Town Board Room of Rongotea’s Coronation Hall. The meeting was convened by William Amey Snr., chairman of the Rongotea Farewell Committee, and Norman Morcom, chairman of the Rongotea-Carnarvon-Tangimoana Patriotic Committee. The aim was to discuss a war memorial for the district. At this time, the types of monuments established after WWI had given way to more useful types of

¹ Vera Hunt, *Campbelltown Rongotea* (Palmerston North, 2011) p. 4

memorial to the losses of WWII. Community halls and other such public facilities were now the new style of war memorial.²

Accordingly, discussion between the thirty people present at the Rongotea meeting resulted in a motion that was carried unanimously. This was that Rongotea's new War Memorial would take the form of a Community Sports Centre. It was also agreed unanimously that the new facility would be built on the grounds of Rongotea School.

The Wanganui Education Board architect, Mr Barsanti, was charged with designing the project and supervising it through to its completion. Tenders for the Hall and the Memorial Gates were in due course called, and the successful tenderer was that of J.P. Wilson, at £7,292.15s.6d. The building was completed by October 1952.

Those present at the official opening of the building on 18 March 1953, in addition to Sir Willoughby Norrie and the local dignitaries, included the Hon. W.E. Bodkin MP, Minister of Internal Affairs, and Manawatu MP, Sir Matthew Oram. The local RSA formed a Guard of Honour, and the RNZAF Band (Ohakea) also played at the event.³

The *Manawatu Standard* of 18 March 1953 (p. 8) introduced its article on the unveiling ceremony with the following quote from the Governor-General: *"The conception of the Rongotea and district war memorial is an ambitious one, and aims to provide sporting and cultural facilities for both young and old. I can think of few finer memorials and I congratulate all those who have worked so hard for this object."*

Norrie, who was paying his first visit to the Manawatu, said that he had served alongside New Zealanders in both world wars. He added that of a town of about 1,000 people, a total of 103 men and three nurses had served in the force (in WWII).

Vera Hunt, in *Campbelltown Rongotea* (p. 308), describes the official opening from the point of view of the Rongotea School pupils: *"18/03/1953 – School closed. Vice Regal visit to Rongotea to officially open the Memorial Recreation Centre. His Excellency the Governor-General, Sir Willoughby Norrie made his first Official visit to the Manawatu to open this wonderful sports complex. The Rongotea School children were in attendance, plus other neighbouring school pupils who were given a school holiday by the Governor-General on behalf of the Queen."*

Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre

The Rongotea Memorial Hall was demolished in the 1990s to enable the construction on the same site of the larger and more efficient Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre. The former Coronation Hall in Thames Street was also disposed of as part of this transition. The new building was officially opened on 25 June 1999.⁴

As well as Rongotea's memorial gates and Roll of Honour plaques, the entrance foyer of the Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre also houses the Roll of Honour Boards from Clydesdale School (WWII), Glen Oroua (WWI & WWII) and Taikorea (WWI & WWII).⁵

² Jock Phillips, *To the Memory: New Zealand's War Memorials* (Nelson, 1916), pp. 172-193

³ Hunt, p. 47-48

⁴ Hunt, p. 48

⁵ Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014), p. 57

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a pair of galvanised steel gates giving access to a playing field behind the Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre. The gates include the numerals 1914.18 on the north gate and 1939.45 on the south gate. There are crosses in each corner of each gate.

The roll of honour memorial plaques are fixed to either side of a central window on the north elevation of the Recreation Centre. The plaques are in pink granite with the names of the servicemen inscribed on each.

NZ History identifies 254 war memorial gates, many of which are outside schools and most are more substantial than those at Te Kawau. Most have masonry posts onto which are fixed memorial plaques and/or arches onto which are fixed plaques.

The gates are adjacent to the Recreation Centre which is at the south eastern corner of Rongotea. Two other memorials are located in the square in the centre of Rongotea on the junction of Thames and Mersey Streets. Rongotea is a small settlement to the west of Palmerston North and is largely flat, rural farmland.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **low architectural** and **technological** values as a very prosaic set of war memorial gates using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **moderate representativeness** and **group** values as one of many memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as they remain on their original site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in World Wars I and II and where memorial services have been held.

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Manawatu Standard: 18 March 1953, p. 8, 'Memorial Unveiled'

Manawatu Times: 19 March 1953, p. 5, 'What women are doing'; 19 March 1953, 'Governor-General Opens Rongotea and District War Memorial'

Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

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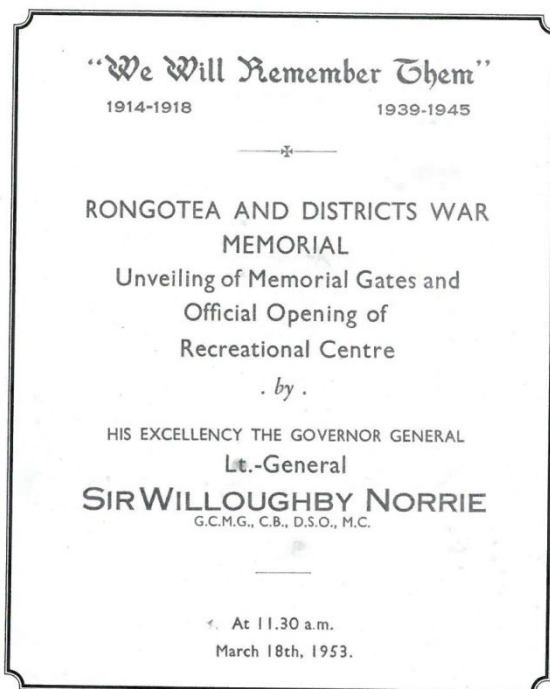


Figure 2: The official opening notice for the unveiling of the memorial gates (Source: Hunt: p. 4)



THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL, SIR WILLOUGHBY NORRIE, speaking yesterday at the official opening ceremony of the Rongotea and District War Memorial. The splendid hall is in the background and one of the two veiled memorial tablets in the gate pillars can be seen at the left. *

Figure 3: *Manawatu Times*, 19 March 1953, p. 8



SIR WILLOUGHBY TALKING TO THE SCHOOL CHILDREN. "Thank you, your Excellency" they chorused enthusiastically when, on behalf of Queen Elizabeth, he granted them a full day's holiday. A youthful leader among the children later called for three cheers which were lustily given.

Figure 4: *Manawatu Times*, 19 March 1953, p. 8



War Memorial Hall

Figure 5: The original setting of the memorial gates are shown in the lower corner of this photo (Source: Hunt: p. 4)



Te Kawanu Memorial Recreation Centre

Figure 6: The present facility (Source: Hunt: p. 4)



Figure 7: The Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre, with the two plaques from the original gateposts at the bases of the two flagpoles. The gates are open at left in this photo – taken 2 December 2017.

Sanson School Memorial Marble Tablets - 2970 Wellington Road (State Highway 1), Sanson



Figure 1 This photo shows the main memorial in the distance alongside its flagpole, and also the memorial at left beneath the verandah that is dedicated to those who served in the Armed Forces – 18 May 2019. The white marble plaques from the Sandon Old Boys Association’s 1921 memorial and the 1906 teachers and scholars memorial; and the black granite plaques from the WWII war district memorial. This new memorial was unveiled on 11 November 1993.

Architect:	Unknown
Builder:	Unknown
Construction Date:	1907, 1921 & 1950 – relocated 1993
Visible Materials:	Concrete, marble plaques
Architectural Style:	Grave marker
Use/Building Type:	Memorial
Date and Compiler:	Val Burr 2018; Ian Bowman 2020
Heritage NZ Listing:	Nil
Proposed Ranking:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The small 1973 book, *Sanson School and District Centennial* gives some of the history of this school and its various memorials.¹ A practical starting point is that the town of Sanson was established in what was originally named the Sandon Block – and Sanson School was once named Sandon School. This name similarity complication is reflected in the story of these various memorials. The 1973 book

¹ Josephine Helen Gravit, *Sanson School and District Centennial, 16th, 17th and 18th November 1973* (Sanson, 1973)

also provides a timeline of the school's patriotic activities, such as fundraising for the Red Cross and the Hospital Ship Fund during World War One. In 1916 the school held its first Anzac Day service, and the Last Post was played on the organ so that the pupils would recognise it. As at 1916, over 60 ex-pupils had gone to war, and by 1917, over 70 local men were serving overseas. On 21 June 1919 a reunion and welcome home event was held for the returning soldiers. This was followed by Peace Day on July 17th and Remembrance Day on November 11th (Armistice Day).² This timeframe also coincided with the decision to install the school's first war memorial.

The Memorial to former Staff & Pupils

The oldest memorial in the set that were unveiled in 1993, predates WWI. It is the marble tablet that was "erected by the Sandon Old Boys' Association in respectful memory of the Teachers and Scholars (of the school) who have died since the school was founded." The Sanson School book records that in 1906, "£18 was collected by 2/6 subscriptions to erect a memorial tablet in the school that cost £16."³ The 1907 Annual Report of the Sandon Old Boys' Association records that: "During the year a movement had been inaugurated to erect a memorial tablet in memory of departed teachers and scholars. The object had received hearty support from old scholars from all parts of the colony, and the stone had been erected five of the school rooms." It is unclear as to how the tablet was erected in five rooms, so presumably this means that it was moved around.⁴

The First War Memorial – Sandon Old Boy's Association and Old Girl's

On 7 May 1919, the *Manawatu Standard* reported that: "At the annual meeting of the Sandon Old Boy's Association Mr G. Williams was elected president and Mr A. E. Penny secretary and treasurer. It was decided to have an honour board placed in the Sanson School, bearing the names of all old pupils who had been on active service."⁵

A more detailed account of the meeting was published in the *Feilding Star* of 7 May 1919.

"The fifteenth annual meeting of the Sandon Old Boys' Association was held in the Council Chambers on Friday evening. Mr W. J. Croucher presided over a good attendance of members.

"The report and balance-sheet submitted showed that the work of the Association during the year had been chiefly centred in the annual effort in raising money for the purchasing of tobacco for old boys and local men on active service. The sum of £113 13s 2d was collected during the year, which enabled the Association to forward three consignments of tobacco and cigarettes to old boys and local men abroad until the signing of the armistice. During the year three old boys were killed in action, namely, Allen Harris, Norman Cox and Walter Gibbs. Ray Harris died in New Zealand from the effects of wounds received on the battlefield. It was also with regret that the demise of Mrs H. Marsh, of Napier, Clarence Anderson, of Wellington, and James Bowater, of Raetihi, had to be placed on record. As far as the secretary could ascertain, 73 old boys and one girl pupil of the Sandon school had left with the various reinforcements for the war. Military Medals had been gained by Roy Blake and Frank Jenkins, while 21 old boys had made the supreme sacrifice.

"The balance-sheet showed a credit balance of £36 16s 2d."

A vote of sympathy was also passed to the relatives of those who had suffered bereavement during the war, and the committee was then elected. It was next resolved "That a reunion and welcome home social and dance to old pupils and local men be held on Friday, June 20." It was then resolved also that an honours board be placed in the Sandon school bearing the names of all old pupils who went on active service. Messrs W. S. Hammond, W. J. Croucher, and J. Masters were appointed to make

² Gravit, pp. 25-26

³ Gravit, p. 24

⁴ *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 29 April 1907, p. 2

⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 7 May 1919, p. 4(7)

enquiries as to the most suitable tablet, and report at the next meeting. This meeting was to take place on the following Saturday.⁶

The *Manawatu Standard* of 18 June 1919 published an account of those whose names would be placed on the memorial:

“It was reported that eighty old boys and one old girl pupil had served in the war, twenty-one having made the supreme sacrifice. The names of the past pupils, known to have been on active service are: R. Abernethy, F.O. Bailey, H. R. Bowater, C. Brookie, P. Brookie, R. Blake, (M.M.), P. Cox, C. Cox, J.M. Croucher, W. Coyle, M. Carter, K. Eglinton, A. Edwards, H. Edwards, T. Edwards, G. Flower, H. Henderson, N. Henderson, C. Henley (s/be ‘Healey’), C. Henson, R. Hill, F. Jenkins, (M.M.), B. Lawrence, C. Lawrence, G. Langdon, J. Lammas, R. Masters, L. Masters, L. Matthews, H. Murray, W. McDonell, M. Neill, C. Opie, F. Peacock, H. Pearce, G. Ross, A. Speedy, W. Stock, E. Speedy, E. Stokes, A. Stokes, T. Sanson, E. Thompson, M. Read, C. Bowater, G. Carter, H.J. Harris, H. Matthews, G.H. Hill, W. Leat, B. McIntyre, Nurse Doris James (on service or have returned); H. A’Court, G. Gibbs, J. Good, T. Harris (died of sickness); P. Andrew. C Blaramberg (sic), H. Barton, M. Cox, N. Cox, W. Gibbs, L. Good, A. Harris, J. Inglis, B. Nolan (Australian Forces), W. Risk, G. Stock, J. Stokes, S. Stokes, R. Ross, A. Hedges (killed in action); G. Hirst (accidentally killed).”⁷

Subsequent additions to the list were: M. Abernethy, G. Harris, R. Harris, W. Harris, E. James, C. Stewart and F. Verry – making up the total of eighty people.

At the reunion of Sandon Old Boys and Old Girls held on 20 June 1919, in addition to the excitement of former pupils catching up with those just back from the front, they also saw an ensign that was hung on the wall, onto which “Miss Penny” had spent considerable time sewing “the names of all the old boys who had been engaged on active service.”⁸

A public meeting was then held at the Sanson Town Hall on 24th July 1919 to decide what form the town’s public memorial would take. However, this one was to be the district’s war memorial, rather than the school’s memorial referred to earlier.⁹ Another meeting in November 1919 looked further into what form the district memorial should take. This involved organisers who were also involved with Sandon Old Boys Memorial, such as Mr A. E. Penny. The residents of the district had been canvassed, and people had been shown a plan of a proposed new entrance to the school, although at this stage it was made clear to people that these district plans were only a proposal. The organising committee was also aiming to collect a sum in the vicinity of £300, which was the estimated cost of the district memorial.¹⁰

In due course, the *Manawatu Standard* of 21 March 1921 (p. 5) described the unveiling ceremony at Sanson School of the Old Boys memorial tablet.

“Saturday was an important day in the history of Sanson, it being the occasion of the unveiling of a tablet commemorating the service of all ex-pupils of the school who took part in the Great War. Long before the singing of the National Anthem, the main schoolroom was filled to overflowing with scholars, their relatives and friends, ex-pupils, a representative assembly of returned soldiers and visitors from every quarter of the district, all having gathered to pay tribute to the old boys who had fought in the late war, 20 of whom made the supreme sacrifice. The secretary of the Sanson Old Boys’ Association (Mr W. J. Croucher) presided, and in a few suitable words he welcomed all present, especially thanking those who had come from a distance to participate in proceedings of so sacred a

⁶ *Feilding Star*, 7 May 1919, p. 2

⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 18 June 1919, p. 9

⁸ *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 23 June 1919, p. 4

⁹ *Feilding Star*, 22 July 1919, p. 2 & 24 July 1919, p. 3(4)

¹⁰ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 14 November 1919, p. 2

nature. He expressed pleasure at the large attendance and was, he said, gratified to see so many ex-pupils present. The fact that the first teacher of the school (Mr G. Williams) was with them that day gave him added pleasure.

SPIRIT OF OUR FOREFATHERS - The hymn "Lead Kindly Light" was then sung, after which Mr Croucher performed the unveiling ceremony, all present standing. He said he appreciated the honour of carrying out this sacred office. It was 40 years since he had attended the school, of which he had only the happiest of memories. There was good reason to be proud of the Sanson School. Eighty or more ex-pupils, including Sister James, had done their share in the Great War, and to the sorrow of the district 20 of these brave warriors would never return. It was beautiful to know that these same men had come under the influence of the school, and that within those very walls they had learned the principles of truth, justice and honour. But there were few who doubted that the coming generation would prove equally heroic, since the spirit of our forefathers was still alive. It was now the duty of the living to see that the fairest hopes were realised of those who had died for liberty and justice. The graves of those who had fallen were scattered far; some lay on the lonely Gallipoli Peninsula, some were buried beneath the burning sands of the Holy Land, others again slept beneath the scarlet poppies of Flanders fields and, blessed thought, in the little cemetery of their township there were the graves of some who had faithfully, served their King and country. They had "gone west," but that every sunset would remind us of our great debt of gratitude was the chairman's concluding hope. (Applause)

SACRIFICE AND REMEMBRANCE - The Rev. B. J. James spoke on the, subject of sacrifice and its remembrance. We should, he said, have a constant eye to our hearts and minds. The weeds of forgetfulness and ingratitude should not be allowed to smother and destroy the flowers in the beds of remembrance. Our soldiers had been idealists and, as the Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour had said recently, if we forget our ideals and let the world become a mechanical soulless thing, then we would very soon find that our power to govern successfully would be gone and our glorious Empire, to-day so proud in its strength, would be no more. All joined in singing "O God Our Help in Ages Past," and the Last Post was sounded by Messrs F. W. Tostevin and J. Coulter, after which Mr Tostevin rendered a sacred solo.

TRIBUTE TO THE MOTHERS - Mr A. C. Burchan, an old resident of Halcombe, said he was in Sanson 40 years ago and he was then associated with the parents of those who were now known as ex-pupils. His wife had once been a teacher at the school and she had exerted a fine influence on those who came within her sphere. He had received letters from many men at the front, but in none of them did he find one word of complaint or hardship. Then, too, the mothers, the uncrowned queens, had not complained; they had borne their grief in heroic silence. Everyone honoured the returned soldier, but those who should be honoured still more were the womenfolk who had ungrudgingly given up their sons and loved ones in the great conflict. Mr Burchan concluded by stressing the importance of supporting the Returned Soldiers Association and helping all returned men to attain that happiness which they had so justly earned.

"A GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE" - Sir James Wilson said that he had listened with interest to the previous speakers. In 1873, he stated, he had first crossed the country on horseback and his association with Sanson went back over a period of more than 40 years, so that he could claim to be an old resident, if not an old boy. He felt, and knew, that all present also realised that the occasion was a sacred one, but there was also an element of joy in the reason for their having assembled. They felt that it was a great and glorious privilege to honour the memory of those who had laid down their lives in so great a conflict fought for aims that were of the noblest character. Greater love had no man than that he laid down his life for his friend, and those who had made the supreme sacrifice had now gone to answer the last great roll call and receive their well-earned reward. (Applause)

ADVICE TO THE CHILDREN - The Rev. F. S. Ramson, in the course of a few words to the children, said we had no need to go to distant lands for heroes, because we had heroes in New Zealand, and those who had not returned, were heroes in the best sense of the word. All who listened to him should strive to play the game and do everything well. If they did this they would find in after life that the time spent in study and hard work had not been wasted and they would then be worthy of the great sacrifices which had been made on their behalf by their brothers in the late war. (Applause)

The school children were then led by Mr Tostevin in the singing of the New Zealand National Anthem, Miss Fagan presiding at the organ. This terminated the proceedings, and afternoon tea was afterwards served in the hall.

NAMES COMMEMORATED - The roll of honour is a handsome marble slab nicely scrolled and inscribed with the words "Sandon Old Boys' Association, Roll of Honour. 1914-1919. Lost we forget. For home and Empire. In Memoriam." Then follow the names of those who fell: M. Abernethy, R. Abernethy, P. Andrew, C. Blaremburg, H. Barton, M. Cox, N. Cox, G. Carter, W. Gibbs, L. Good, A. Harris. R. Harris, A. Hedges, J. Inglis, B Nolan, W. Risk. R. Ross, G. Stock, S. Stokes and J. Stokes. The names of those who served are also engraved as under:—F. Bailey, H. Bowater, C. Bowater, C. Brookie, P. Brookie, R. Blake (M.M.), P. Cox, C. Cox, J. Croucher, W. Coyle, M. Carter, K. Eglinton. T. Edwards, H Edwards, A. Edwards, G. Flower, G. Gibbs, J. Good, T. Harris, H. Harris, W. Harris, G. Harris, N. Henderson, H. Henderson, C. Healey, C. Henson, G. Hill, R. Hill, Sister Dora James, E. James, F. Jenkins (M.M.), B. Lawrence, C. Lawrence, G Langdon, J. Lammas, W. Leat, R. Masters L. Masters, H. Matthews, H. Murray, W. McDonell, B. McIntyre, M. Neill, H. Opie, F. Peacock, H. Pearce, G. Ross, M. Read, C. Stewart, A. Speedy, E Speedy, W. Stock, E. Stokes, A. Stokes, T. Sanson, E. Thompson and F. Verry.¹¹

This old school building was demolished in 1922 and replaced by a new building that was completed in 1923. Although no longer used for the school, this 1923 building still forms a backdrop to Sanson's district war memorial,¹² even though all the other memorials have been moved to the school's new location.

The second Memorial: Sanson's District War Memorial

It was not until 31 August 1924 that the Sanson District's war memorial was unveiled - this duty being undertaken by Major-General C.W. Melvill, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O, G.O.C., New Zealand Forces, who had unveiled a number of the district's war memorials around that time. This new memorial took: *"the form of an ornamental concrete fence of rough-cast finish, (that) divides the foreground of the Sanson school from the roadway. There are ten ornamental posts, two of which bear tablets with the names of the men who went from the district while the posts on either side of the steel gate have tablets in memory of those who were killed. The work was commenced last April and was completed five or six weeks ago at a total cost of about £200. A touch of colour was lent to the function by the ensign which flew from the school flagpole and those which draped the marble inscribed tablets, while several beautiful wreaths were laid at the foot of the memorial."*¹³

The lengthy report on this unveiling ceremony appeared in the *Manawatu Standard* of 1 September 1924 (p. 4). It recorded the wording on the new memorial: *"This fence was erected by the residents of Sanson and district to the glory of God and in memory of the men who fought and died for their country. The Motherland called and they went—1914-1918."* **ROLL OF HONOUR - The names of those who died were:—P. K. Andrew, H, A'Court, W. and A. Behrent, H. and A. A. Schultz, P. H. Gifford, M. L. Good, E. Henson, A. R. Harris, E. J. Peacock and J. Witt."**

A comparison between the names on the school memorial and those on the district memorial reveals that the district memorial lists fifty names, of which twenty-one are also on the school memorial.¹⁴

¹¹ This list contains 77 names whereas the actual plaque has 80 names. This list includes M. Abernethy and A. Hedges among the dead, whereas they returned – while not including H. A'Court, who did die. Meanwhile, G. Hirst and L. Matthews, who survived, are omitted from this list.

¹² Gravit, p. 26

¹³ *Manawatu Standard*, 1 September 1924, p. 4

¹⁴ 'Sanson, Manawatu' (WWI & WWII) on 'New Zealand War Memorials and Rolls of Honour': <https://www.sooty.nz/sansonROH.html>

The Interwar Period

On 28 February 1927 (p. 15), at which time the histories of many of Manawatu's schools were outlined in the *Manawatu Standard*, reference was made to both of the war memorials at the school – which had opened in 1872. This article stated that: *“In 1924 a memorial gate and fence in rough cast were erected in front of the school as the district’s tribute to the memory of those from this district who served in the Great War.”* It then referred to the school's Old Boys association, which had been formed in 1904. The article stated that the association had been formed with its main object being *“the preservation of friendship made by all scholars who have attended the Sanson School.”* The association's *“annual re-union social is the leading local social event of the year and has been a means of providing a common meeting place for all to renew acquaintances and early friendship. Among its other activities the association has been instrumental in placing in the school a marble memorial scroll and a roll of honour of those of the school's past pupils who served their country during the Great War. The memorial contains over 80 names of old pupils, 18 of whom made the supreme sacrifice.”*¹⁵

Of note on subsequent reports on the annual memorial services of the Sanson Old Boys' Association, is that of 1936, which referred to a wreath being placed on the Roll of Honour on the course of the event.¹⁶ The *Manawatu Standard* of 27 April 1938 (p. 7) then records that: *“Although there was no Anzac service held in Sanson yesterday, a wreath, made by the Misses Penny, was placed as usual on the memorial gates at the school.”*

In 1946, another 'welcome home' event was held *“and the names of those who had served overseas (in the Second World War) were added to the flag”*. This presumably means that their names had been added to the aforementioned ensign upon which the WWI names had earlier been sewn. Two ex-pupils had been lost in WWII.¹⁷

In the course of the school's 75th Anniversary in November 1948, Mr J.M Croucher (who had written two histories of the area) described the local community's activities during the First World War. He spoke of how a roll of honour had been unveiled in the school to commemorate *“the past pupils who had given their lives in the service of the Empire, together with the names of all those who had answered the call of King and country.”* He also mentioned that *“a similar marble tablet in remembrance of the teachers who had passed away since the school was first opened”*, which was at the time also on display in one of the school rooms.¹⁸

The references to the former teachers memorial and the Sandon Old Boys war memorial, both indicated that at the time these memorials were housed inside the school building.

The Third War Memorial – WWII servicemen

On Arbor Day 1950, trees were planted at the school in memory of the district's WWII servicemen. The *Manawatu Standard* of Wednesday, 2 August 1950, stated that 'today' was Arbor Day, and that local schools were to be planting trees either that day or the next. However, no reference was found to Sanson School in either of the two Palmerston North newspapers of the time.

Apparently on this same date (Arbor Day 1950), the marble slab commemorating the servicemen who served in WWII, was also unveiled on the school fence.¹⁹ It is this slab – or in fact two black granite

¹⁵ Note that there were 19 dead on the school memorial and 12 dead on the district memorial – an apparent total of 31 dead. However, there were four duplications, leaving 27 in fact dead over both memorials. Sources: The actual memorials, and also 'Sanson, Manawatu' (WWI & WWII) on 'New Zealand War Memorials and Rolls of Honour': <https://www.sooty.nz/sansonROH.html>

¹⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 7 July 1936, p. 12

¹⁷ Gravit, p. 28

¹⁸ *Manawatu Standard*, 24 November 1948, p. 3 (4-6)

¹⁹ Gravit, p. 29; *Manawatu Standard*, 2 August 1950, p. 6 (6)

slabs – that also make up part of the new (1993) memorial. The text on one of these slabs commemorates the men of the Sanson district who served overseas during WWII, and names the two men who were killed - K. McCabe and K.M. Pearce. Meanwhile the other slab lists the names of fifty-five men from the Sanson district who returned from overseas service. These were: W. Behrent, L.F. Bishop, K.C. Bond, E.J. Bowater, E.R. Caple, W.A. Clark, M.L. Cockburn, J. Davey, R.E. Davey, G.L.K. Drew, W.S.K. Drew, C.E. Edmunds, O.C. Ellern, J. Fay, P.T. Gedye, N. Gifkins, C.L. Grace, L. Gray, P. Gray, T.M. Henson, J. Hepburn, W.A. Hepburn, J. Jessop, J. Kilpatrick, R. Kilpatrick, C. Lammas, W. Leahy, D.H. Leitch, F.A. Lumsden, K.G. Lumsden, C.S. Marsh, B.M. Merritt, F.J. Meyer, R.E. Meyer, C.E. Miller, F.J. Mitchell, K.A. Mullins, F.J. Murphy, H.G. Murphy, R.H.K. McKay, A.G. Nisbit, C.F. Nichol森, C.N. Oppatt, R.S. Oppatt, A. Quarrie, J. Quarrie, V.J. Sanson, I. Simpson, R.J. Telford, G.I.T Tong, L.F. Tostevin, A. Walls, J.G. Wilson, A.H.C. York, B.T.H. York.²⁰

Another Sanson war memorial that was not located during this study, but which is recorded as having the heading “*In commemoration of the men of the Sanson district who served overseas in World War II*”, has a completely different list of forty names. This ‘missing’ Roll of Honour consists of the following names: W.C.H. Alsop, H.R. Bowater, C. Brookie, P. Brookie, W.F. Brown, J.Q. Cameron, W.F. Coyle, J.M. Croucher, S.W. Curran, J. Currie, R.J. Giles, W.J. Good, A.H. Hartley, C. Henson, L. Henson, G. Hirst, C. Irvine, F. Jenkins, J.C. Lammas, B.S. Lawrence, C.C. Lawrence, W.J. Leat, T. Lowery, L.J. Matthews, K. McCabe, W. McConachy, W. McConachy, J. McCutcheon, A.J. Mitchell, H. Murray, F.W. Peacock, W. Peacock, H.A. Pearce, K.M. Pearce, M. Read, L.A. Richards, W. Ross, D.O. Stewart, J. Thompson, and E. Willcock.²¹

Given the number of the same surnames that are also on the WWI Sandon Old Boys’ Roll of Honour, possibly this ‘missing’ Roll of Honour was for the school’s former pupils, while the black granite one now on the new memorial at the school, appears to have been the district memorial.

The Relocated Memorial set

By July 1990, the former Manawatu District Council’s building at Sanson was unused (after the amalgamation of a number of local councils in 1989). However, this building was then only seven years old. Meanwhile, Sanson School’s old site now had over 650 trucks passing it daily and it was under the Ohakea Airbase’s flightpath. The main road was considered to be a safety hazard because the passing cars and trucks ignored the pedestrian crossing outside the school. This school building, which had been built in 1923, was also now described as “*pretty Mickey Mouse*” due to the way things had been randomly added to it. Needless to say the school’s community were keen to relocate to the former council building.²² Sanson School’s official opening at the new site thus occurred on 6 October 1991.²³

The new war memorial was re-dedicated at the new school site on 11 November 1993.²⁴ This was also the 75th anniversary of Armistice Day.²⁵ However, the school rededication appears not to have been covered by the *Manawatu Standard*.

²⁰ Please note that this list of names was copied from a set of several photos after discovering a mismatch of WWII names, and that there may be errors with initials, as the silver paint has gone from the engraving.

²¹ Source: ‘New Zealand War Memorials and Rolls of Honour’: ‘Sanson, Manawatu’ (WWI & WWII) <https://www.sooty.nz/sansonROH.html>

²² *Manawatu Standard*, 20 July 1990, p. 4

²³ *Manawatu Standard*, 7 October 1991, p. 1

²⁴ Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014), p. 59

²⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 13 November 1993, p. 10

The new memorial includes the 1921 marble tablet that was once displayed inside both the 1923 school building and its predecessor. It also includes the memorial to the school's deceased former teachers and pupils that dates to 1906. The new memorial also includes the black granite plaques from the 1950 WWII that were formerly on the front fence of the old school – the former sites of which are still visible on that fence.

An additional war memorial – located on a brick wall directly outside the classrooms – is also present, although it is detached from the other school memorial. It reads *“Dedicated to the men and women of Sanson and District who served in the Armed Forces. Especially those who made the supreme Sacrifice. ‘Lest We Forget’”* The origin of that memorial was not located for this study.

Meanwhile the 1924 District memorial fence and its various marble plaques still remain in place on the front fence in front of the old school building.

Amongst the subsequent Anzac Day services around the country each year, the *NZ Herald* of 23 April 2008, recorded the following: *“Sanson: Citizens service (9.15am) Sanson Cenotaph Sanson School, Wellington Rd.”*²⁶

The names of the people listed on the various memorials are recorded under ‘Sanson, Manawatu’, on the website ‘New Zealand War Memorials and Rolls of Honour’. However, it appears that the compiler of the list was unaware that some of the plaques had been removed to the new school site since the list was compiled – with the school also being erroneously described as ‘now closed’. Comparisons of the names recorded on the various lists on the aforementioned webpage and on the memorials, have been quoted above due to the mixed references and purposes of the various (school and district) memorials.²⁷

Related Matters

Not located during this study, but very relevant to it was the WWII Roll of Honour ‘board’ listing the former Sanson School pupils whose names were listed on the ‘Sanson, Manawatu’ website entitled ‘New Zealand War Memorials and Rolls of Honour’. Also missing is the ensign with the names sewn onto it of all the former pupils who served in both WWI and WWII. It is possible that the missing flag alone served as the source of this list. This flag is not known to the current Sanson School staff.

As well as the various former teachers and ex-pupils memorials, the Sandon Old Boys’ Association was also very actively involved with the development of the Mount Stewart Early Settlers Memorial that was unveiled on 20 April 1940. Immediately after the main memorial was unveiled, the Sandon Old Boys’ Association unveiled their own memorial to the local early settlers. Their memorial consisted of a direction finder and a sun dial set on a pedestal in front of the main memorial. This memorial was dedicated by Mr W.J. Croucher, *“after which the New Zealand Ensign, which forms the Roll of Honour of the Sandon Old Boys’ Association, having enscrolled thereon the names of pupils of the old school who answered the call in 1914-18, was hoisted to the peak of a flagstaff near the memorial; while old pupils present joined hands and stood in silent contemplation of the act. It formed a fitting finale to the afternoon’s proceedings.”*²⁸

The fate of the direction finder and sun dial is unknown, but in 1990 a new plaque was installed on the pedestal where those items were once located. The new plaque does not mention the Sandon Old

²⁶ *NZ Herald*, 23 April 2008) https://www.nzherald.co.nz/anzac-day/news/article.cfm?c_id=773&objectid=10505367

²⁷ ‘Sanson, Manawatu’, on the website ‘New Zealand War Memorials and Rolls of Honour’ <https://www.sooty.nz/sansonROH.html>

²⁸ *Evening Post*, 22 April 1940, p. 5

Boys' Association; its significant involvement with the establishment of the main Mt. Stewart memorial; or the Association's own sun dial memorial previously on the same pedestal.²⁹

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a painted concrete memorial in the form of a grave marker with a central, slanted headstone (also known as a desk tablet) with a marble plaque and set in front of a raised, horizontal, rectangular slab to the rear. The overall plan form is a cross. The slab has plaques either side of the central headstone.

The central plaque names eighty men who served in WWI with the 19 who lost their lives set within a central scroll.

The design of the memorial is unusual. Obelisks were the most common design with cenotaphs, gates and arches the next most common. Soldier figures and symbolic women figures representing victory or motherhood, towers, useable memorial such as clocks or bridges were less common. As were natural features.

The memorial is set within Sanson School on the southern outskirts of Sanson on the main highway to Wellington. Opposite the school is a farm machinery yard and further to the north the main junction of roads between Wellington and Palmerston North. Sanson is set in flat/rolling rural farmland.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **low architectural** and **technological** values as an unusual grave marker styled memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One.

The memorial has **low authenticity** as it is an agglomeration of memorials from elsewhere.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in World War One and where memorial services have been held. It is also sited within a school, a common location intended to inspire students with the sacrifice of those who died serving their country.

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²⁹ Manawatu District Council: '03: Mt. Stewart Early Settlers Memorial' heritage research (2017)

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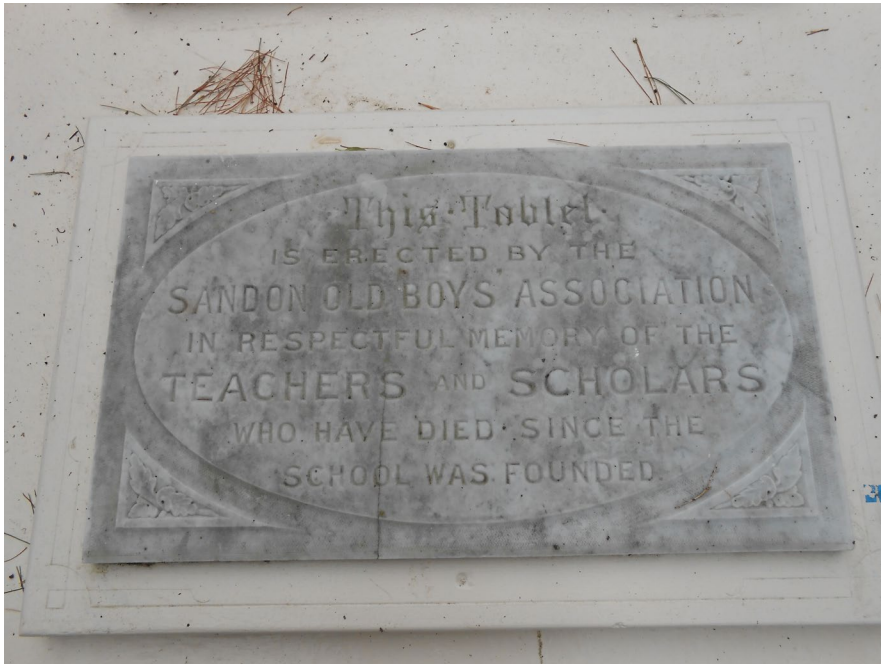


Figure 2 The Teachers and Scholars memorial that dates from 1906 – on 18 May 2019



Figure 3 The school's former pupils who served and in some cases were lost in WWI – on 18 May 2019



Figure 4 Part of the WWII District Memorial that was on formerly on the front fence at the old school – photographed on 18 May 2019. Note that both black granite plaques have lost most of the silver paint from their lettering and so they were not easy to photograph due to the reflection.



Figure 5 This is the old Sanson School building at 2A Dundas Road (SH1), Sanson, prior to 1993. It also shows one of the two WWII plaques in its original location, along with the 1924 district memorial plaques, which remain in their original places. (Source: 'Sanson war memorial gate': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/sanson-war-memorial-gate> Ministry for Culture and Heritage)

Taikorea War Memorial, North-Eastern Quadrant of Douglas Square, Rongotea



Architect:	
Builder:	
Construction date:	1920
Visible materials:	Concrete base, chamfered, stepped basalt plinth, granite shaft
Architectural style:	Obelisk
Use/building type:	Memorial
Date and compiler:	Val Burr 2018, Ian Bowman 2020
Heritage NZ Listing:	Nil
Proposed ranking:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The Taikorea War Memorial was originally installed on the north-west corner of Couper and Taikorea Roads, where it was unveiled on 16 July 1920. Three re-locations and at least two new base designs later, it now stands in Douglas Square, Rongotea, where it was rededicated in 2010. It has also had a replacement plaque, another new base and a further slight relocation since then.

Planning the Memorial

The *Manawatu Standard* of 27 May 1916 (p. 7) reported on early plans to compile a list of Taikorea men who were serving in WWI: *"From our midst will shortly be farewelled a further batch of recruits, possibly the last under the volunteer system. In due course the full list of names will be published, to their lasting honour and credit. Considerable difficulty is being experienced by the headmaster of our school in securing particulars sufficient to enable him to complete a full and exact 'Roll of Honour' out of the large number of 'old boys' who have joined the colours. He will be very grateful for assistance in this direction from past and present residents of our beautiful and prosperous district."*

In due course the memorial listed the names of twenty-six men who served in the First World War, of whom seven had lost their lives. Of the deceased, four of the seven consist of two sets of brothers. James Michael O'Grady (29) was killed in action at Gallipoli on 4 June 1915¹, while Daniel Francis O'Grady (24) was killed in France on 13 September 1918. A third brother, Patrick Timothy O'Grady, survived the war and is also named on the memorial. The second set of brothers included George Barnard Russell Taylor (32), who died of wounds in Belgium on 7 December 1917, and Charles Brian Taylor (21), who was killed in action in France on 30 June 1918. The remaining three deceased include: Thomas Lyons (21), a trainee school teacher and a former pupil of Taikorea School, who died of wounds in France on 8 April 1918²; and Harry Hardy (28), who was killed in France on 24 August 1918, had lived at Taikorea for some years.³ The last to die was Harry Thistlewaite (28), who had been a farm labourer at Taikorea before enlisting in 1916.⁴ He was killed in action in France on 9 September 1918. His name is spelt incorrectly as 'Thistlethwaite' on the memorial.

Having lost five of the district's seven dead in the previous five months, it is perhaps no surprise that plans were soon underway toward erecting a memorial to the local men from the area who had fought and in some cases died. However, the initial meeting on the topic did not go very well. The *Manawatu Standard* on 16 October 1918 (p. 6) recorded the following:

"The meeting called recently for the purpose of erecting some sort of a memorial to the local boys who have taken their part and in some cases given their lives for the sake of humanity in this wretched war, was very poorly attended, due, it is believed, to the fact that insufficient publicity was given to the matter. Consequently nothing final could be arranged, but it was decided to send two residents to Palmerston to make enquiries as to what would be the best course to take, and it is understood that as a result of such enquiries there are some very good specimens of art in the shape of rolls of honour to be placed before the next meeting, which will be duly advertised in the 'Standard.'

"I might mention for the information of the Taikorea settlers that as far as the previous meeting is concerned, it was unanimously decided that the district should not be canvassed for donations to the project, and Taikorea settlers who are in sympathy with the cause are asked to accept this intimation to look out for the next meeting, and make a point of being present to help formulate some scheme of acknowledgment to the boys who have done their bit."

Over the next few weeks, Taikorea, along with the rest of the country, was struck by the Influenza Epidemic and no notice of a subsequent community meeting was located during this study.

¹ *Manawatu Standard*, 30 July 1915, p. 5. Note that he enlisted under the name James Hurley, which was his mother's maiden name. See also <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/> and search his two names.

² *NZ Times*, 29 April 1918, p. 3

³ *Manawatu Standard*, 17 September 1918, p. 2

⁴ *Manawatu Times*, 10 June 1916, p. 7. His name is incorrectly spelt 'Thistlethwaite' on the memorial, ref. also <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/> and search "Thistlewaite".

However, the task duly progressed and the Taikorea Soldiers' Memorial was unveiled at 2:00pm on Friday, 16th July 1920.⁵

No published report on the unveiling of the monument appears to be available, however, the memorial stood on a substantial four-stepped concrete base on a piece of the farm of Michael Lyons – whose son Thomas is one of those named as killed on the memorial. The memorial was on the north-western corner of the intersection of Taikorea and Couper Roads – across the road from Taikorea School.⁶

In 1927, the lack of protection of the memorial led to an exchange by aggrieved correspondents to the *Manawatu Times*. Accordingly 'Disgusted' wrote: "*Sir, —It is some years now since the above was erected at the Cross Road, near the school at Taikorea, and since the erection no steps have been taken to build a curbing around the same or fence it in, and cattle and sheep can be found herded around the stone. I believe there is a fund available for such a purpose, and I think it is time something was done in the matter.*"⁷

In response, local resident L.C. Algar wrote: *(To the Editor.) "Sir, —My attention having been drawn to a letter in a recent issue of your journal re the above, I feel called upon to make some reply to 'Disgusted' Firstly then I may be excused for condemning with no ill-feeling the attitude taken up by your correspondent not because there is no truth in what he says—it is truth in the main. Still, I think if he (or she) is or was interested in the memorial, the position as things stand to-day must be known to him and that being so it was quite easy to get the particulars and, give some assistance to overcome the difficulty that at present exists. That there is money available to complete the job is true but there exists also a very serious difficulty (which I am not going to discuss here) in the way of completing the work although I sincerely wish that could be done. I would submit in all sincerity to your correspondent that a better course to follow than rushing into print in this matter would be to join up with those and assist them to make the monument representative of the cause of its promotion. This I hope he will do at a meeting to be held shortly.*"⁸

Perhaps there was an ongoing problem with the actual ownership of the small bit of land the memorial was sited upon, but a photo of the memorial on the original site, shows a concrete and pipe fence surrounding it.⁹ Ellen Lyons, the wife of property owner, Michael Lyons, died in January 1926, followed by Michael's death in December 1938.

The book *Taikorea School: 70th Anniversary 1888-1958* (p. 37) records a memory of the memorial by a teacher, Mr J.C. Ward, who taught at the school between 1931 and 1936: "*Before each Anzac Day we made wreaths and marched quietly over the road to the memorial. The floral emblems were laid in memory of those from the little community who had given their lives or their services in World War I, and maybe since then more names have been added. But on those occasions we bowed our heads to Laurence Binyon's moving lines: 'Age will not weary them, Nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun, And in the morning, We shall remember them.'*"

Relocations

The memorial remained on its original site until 1980, and the reason for its relocation then was that this site was on privately-owned farmland, and the local residents argued that it should be located

⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 15 July 1920, p. 1

⁶ See Remail Hehir (ed.), *Taikorea 1888-1988* (Palmerston North, 1988), pp. 19-22; and Vera Hunt, *Campbelltown Rongotea*, p. 285

⁷ *Manawatu Times*, 3 May 1927, p. 6

⁸ *Manawatu Times*, 11 May 1927, p. 6

⁹ Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014), p. 61

on public land.¹⁰ One source stated that the farm had been sold, and that this was the reason for shifting the memorial.¹¹

The memorial was duly moved across the road to the Taikorea School grounds (at 657 Taikorea Road), where it stood near the Couper Road end of the main school building.¹² A photo taken of it at the school in 1988 indicates that its base was now quite basic.¹³

The closure of the school in December 2001, and the site's eventual sale¹⁴, resulted in the memorial being on the move again. Its next stop was along the road a short distance to a site alongside the Taikorea Coronation Hall.

The Taikorea Coronation Hall had been built in 1911, with a memorial wing (containing toilets, dressing rooms, a supper room and a kitchen) having been added to it in about 1952, in memory of those who fought in that war. A Roll of Honour board for the WWII servicemen was also built into the exterior of the front wall of the new extension.¹⁵ In 1988, the Taikorea Hall Society arranged for a new Roll of Honour board to replace the one listing the names of the WWII men, and also to record the names on the marble plaques on the WWI memorial. This was then hung in the hall.¹⁶

However, before long the old Taikorea hall was also sold for relocation to the marae at Rangiotu; and its former site was also to be disposed of.¹⁷

Discussion within the community then focused on what to do with the war memorial plaque from inside the hall, and with the war memorial column itself. It was felt that the plaque should go to the Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre, in Rongotea - where it now is.¹⁸ Suggestions during 2008 included installing the war memorial column on the highest place in the vicinity of Taikorea, with a fence around it so that it looked nice when old residents visited the district. Alternatively, it was thought that it should go to the Rongotea Cemetery. Discussion also revolved around who would pay for this work and then, after the Douglas Square site was proposed, whether it was appropriate to have two war memorials (Rongotea's own, and Taikorea's) in the same location. It was also noted that Chris Hehir, who had moved the memorial twice before, still had the planks needed for the relocation, and that he also had some of the plaques from it for safe-keeping.¹⁹

Finally the decision was made to move the memorial to the north-eastern quadrant of Douglas Square, in Rongotea. Gary Barnett of Feilding was given the task of moving it, along with constructing the new base and installing the plaques. The actual shift occurred on 27 March 2009.²⁰

¹⁰ *Manawatu Standard*, 20 February 2015, p. 4: 'Taikorea memorial to stay in Rongotea'

¹¹ Olsen & Doyle, p. 61

¹² This information kindly provided by former Taikorea School pupils Anna MacDonald, Ethne Maher and Kirsty Johnston, via Facebook, on December 4th & 5th, 2017

¹³ Remai Hehir (ed.), *Taikorea 1888-1988* (Palmerston North, 1988), p. 5

¹⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 21 May 2007, p. 4: 'Derelict school a hole in family memories'

¹⁵ The plans for this extension are dated May 1952. 'Taikorea Hall – War Memorial Wing, 1952', Ref: MDC Plan 2438, Archives Central, Feilding. Also: MDC Hall file: 'Taikorea Hall' ("Was file 9/2013, Now 9/2026")

¹⁶ Hehir, p. 42-43

¹⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 31 January 2009, 'Marae set to buy hall for \$1': <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/327471/Marae-set-to-buy-hall-for-1>; *Manawatu Standard*, 1 June 2011, 'Old hall a new wharekai', <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/5084299/Old-hall-a-new-wharekai>

¹⁸ Manawatu District Council Hall file: 'Taikorea Hall' ("Was file 9/2013, Now 9/2026"); Doyle & Olsen, p. 62

¹⁹ Manawatu District Council Hall file: 'Taikorea Hall' ("Was file 9/2013, Now 9/2026")

²⁰ Olsen & Doyle, p. 61

Rongotea History

More than 150 people attended the memorial's rededication in Rongotea on 20 February 2010. The NZ Defence Force formed an honour guard around the memorial for the event. The rededication was performed by Padre Chris Purdle from Linton Camp, before those present moved on to the Te Kawau Memorial Recreation Centre where the Taikorea Honours Board was now installed. The war memorial also now had an extra plaque that read: "*Originally erected at Taikorea, resited March 2009 after the closure of the School and Hall.*"²¹

In 2013, Peter Olsen, a retired farmer from Colyton, began a mission to restore over sixty of Manawatu's war memorials prior to the 2015 centenary of the Gallipoli landings. He found that of the 16 granite and marble monuments in the district, only two were in disrepair. These were the ones at Taikorea (sic) and Cheltenham. Olsen stated that: "*They had no reinforcement, the ground had subsided, cracks were forming in the foundations, and they needed a helping hand from the council.*"²²

Peter Olsen was also working on a "*glossy coffee table book*" on the history of the memorials in the district, and wanted to source flagpoles for each monument for the centenary celebrations.²³ Co-compiled with Janet Doyle, this research became the book *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District*, which was published in 2014.

Not everyone had been happy at having the memorial relocated from its original home. In February 2015, two Manawatu District Councillors voted against a proposal to leave the memorial at Rongotea, instead of returning it to Taikorea. The argument given was that there was now no visual reminder that Taikorea ever existed, and that it had in fact been a thriving community until the school and the hall had closed. The Rongotea RSA had also objected to the memorial having been removed from Taikorea. However, the majority of the District Councillors voted for it to remain in Rongotea.²⁴

In early 2015, the war memorial underwent an overhaul, and the four original upper segments were installed on a much sturdier new mount sited alongside where it had stood since 2009.²⁵ The plaque that had been unveiled in 2010, was also replaced with a black granite one that had the same wording.

The photos of the memorial reveal that during its various relocation, the plaques were not remounted as the designers had originally intended – although the re-sitings may have created various reasons for this. The top four segments are the originals, but below that the concrete bases have differed. The bottom of the four original segments has weathered badly on one face, with its wording "Duty Nobly Done" now being very indistinct.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises an obelisk of granite with a chamfered, stepped basalt plinth and a concrete base. A marble plaque on the base has states "the names of the mean at the foot hereof made the supreme sacrifice in the defence of King and Empire, As men they lived, As men they died". Seven names are noted below the inscription while another marble plaque on the opposite

²¹ Vera Hunt, *Campbelltown Rongotea* (Palmerston North, 2011), p. 285

²² *Manawatu Standard*, 29 May 2012. [Note that the base had included reinforcing, as recorded in the MDC file: 'Taikorea Hall' ("Was file 9/2013, Now 9/2026")]

²³ *Manawatu Standard*, 29 May 2012

²⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 20 February 2015, p. 4: 'Taikorea memorial to stay in Rongotea'

²⁵ Refer to the Google Street View photo of the war memorial in Douglas Square, which was photographed in April 2015, with the outline of the former mount side still visible alongside it.

face notes the another 19 names. "Duty nobly done" is inscribed on the basalt plinth, while on the shaft of the obelisk is written "Lest we forget, This monument was erected by the Taikorea Settlers in honour of the boys who left this district to fight in the Great European War 1914-1918". A further marble plaque read "Originally erected at Taikoea resited March 2009 after the closure of the school and hall".

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare²⁶.

The memorial is located on the north east quadrant of Douglas Square, opposite the Douglas Square war memorial on the north west quadrant in the centre of Rongotea. The site is grassed with flower beds in the south east corner, trees lining the northern perimeter and several seats facing in towards the memorial. Mersey and Thames Streets divide the square equally into four quadrants with a roundabout at its centre.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **moderate** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, authenticity, group** and **moderate people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **moderate authenticity** as it has been relocated twice prior to its installation on its current site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those from Taikorea who died in World War One and where memorial services have been held.

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²⁶ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

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Also: Former Taikorea School pupils Anna MacDonald, Ethne Maher and Kirsty Johnston, via Facebook, on December 4th & 5th, 2017

IMAGES



Figure 1: An undated view of the lower portion of the Taikorea War Memorial, as pictured in Peter Olsen and Janet Doyle's book *Communities Remember World War One* (p. 61). Taikorea Road is in the background. The memorial's mount looks rather scuffed and damaged, and presumably the photo was taken not long before its 1980 relocation. The second photo (taken on 2 December 2017)

shows the corner of the former Lyons farm, where the memorial originally stood on the corner of Taikorea Road (at left) and Couper Road.

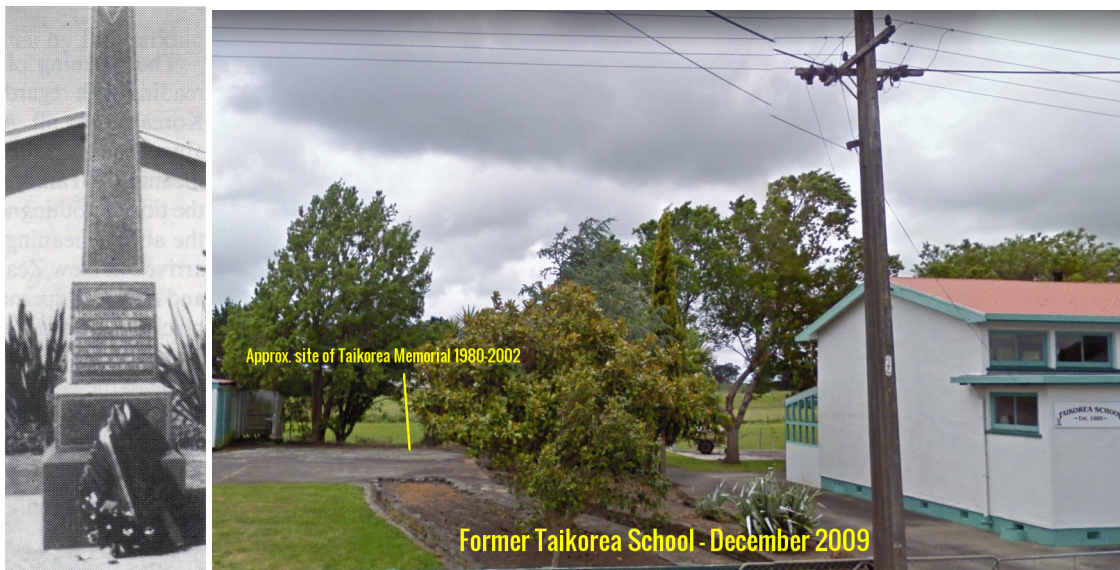


Figure 2: The Taikorea War Memorial shown while at the Taikorea School site, from the book *Taikorea, 1888-1988* (p. 5). Possibly the photo was taken during the school's Centennial celebrations which took place between April 22nd and 24th, 1988, where a wreath was laid at it. Also shown is a Google Street View photo of the former Taikorea School, with the approximate location of the memorial shown. The memorial was relocated to alongside the Taikorea Coronation Hall after the school closed in 2001.



Figure 3: The Taikorea Coronation Hall with the war memorial and a flagpole alongside it – photographed by Google Street View in April 2008, eleven months before the memorial was relocated to Rongotea.



Figure 4: This Google Street View image of Douglas Square, Rongotea, was taken in April 2015. It shows the monument on its new foundation, while the remains of its previous site are visible at left.

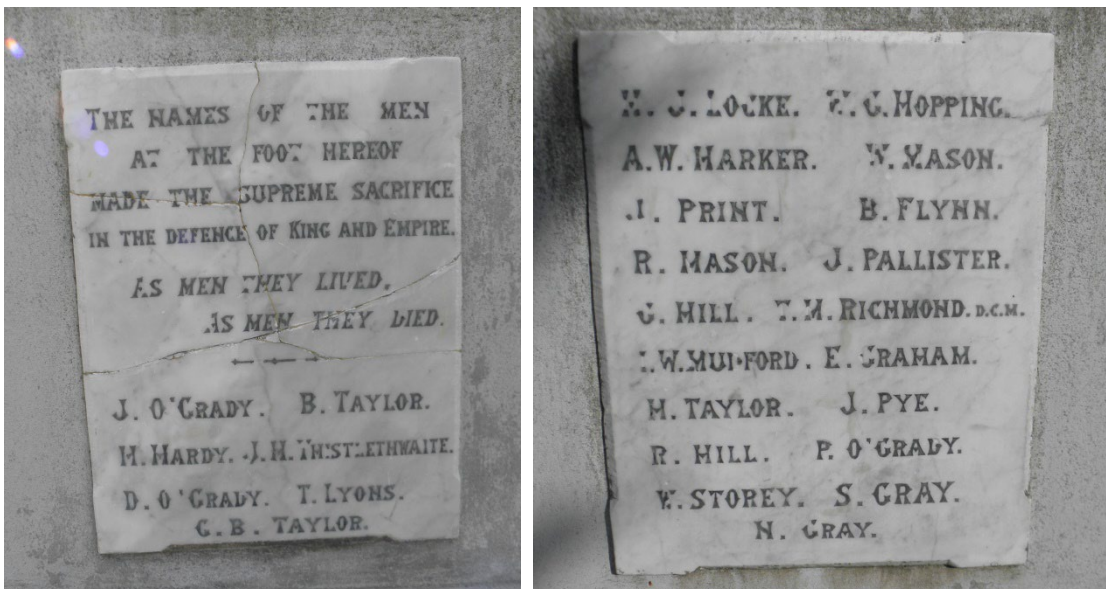


Figure 5: Twenty-six servicemen were named on the original plaques that were installed on the memorial in 1920, including seven killed. The local history books on Taikorea published in 1958 and 1988, increased the total number of men who served in WWI to 34, including 10 who died. A further 20 served in WWII, of whom two were killed. J.H. Thistlewaite's name was spelt correctly in the 1958 book.

Taonui School War Memorial, 170 Waughs Road, Taonui



Figure 1 The Taonui School Memorial (15 December 2017)

Architect:

Builder:

Construction date: 1920

Visible materials: Concrete, granite plaques, steel railings

Architectural style: Gateway arch

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and compiler: Val Burr 2018, Ian Bowman 2020

Heritage NZ Listing: Nil

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

The plans that led to the construction of the war memorial at Taonui School gained public attention in July 1919, with the publication in the *Feilding Star* of the following article: *TAONU SOLDIERS' FUNCTION - There is a movement afoot in Taonui to commemorate the return of the local soldiers and to erect a memorial to commemorate those who have 'gone west.'* In connection with this, Mr Arch. Campbell is calling a meeting at the school for tomorrow evening at 7 o'clock, and all interested are requested to attend.¹

The meeting was duly held at the school at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, July 23rd, in conjunction with the Returned Soldiers' Social and War Memorial.² In due course the memorial was constructed by "Mr Jones" of F.J. Jones' Monumental Works, Feilding, who was probably part of the Palmerston North firm Messrs F.J. and W.H. Jones. This firm also built a number of other war memorials around the district.³

By September 1920, the "handsome memorial gateway to the Taonui School grounds (had) been erected by the people of the Taonui and Aorangi district as a memorial to the ten men from that area

¹ *Feilding Star*, 22 July 1919, p. 2

² *Feilding Star*, 22 July 1919, p. 3

³ For example, at Foxton (*Manawatu Herald*, 8 April 1920, p. 2); also *Feilding Star*, 12 August 1910, p. 2 & 12 May 1913, p. 2

*who gave their lives in the Great War. The ceremonial unveiling of the gateway is to take place next Sunday afternoon. The Feilding Salvation Army Band, always to the fore in such good work, will be in attendance, and the Hon. D. H. Guthrie and Mr Ed. Newman, M.P., have promised to attend.”*⁴

As it happened, the Hon. D.H. Guthrie was unable to attend the event on Sunday, 26th September to unveil the memorial. He had been detained in Wellington through having to attend a Cabinet meeting there.⁵

The *Feilding Star* of 27 September 1920 (p. 2) then reported on the unveiling ceremony: *“The Memorial Gateway erected at the entrance to the grounds of the Taonui School by the people of the Taonui and Aorangi district is an ideal tribute to fallen soldiers, it is upon the minds of the rising generation that there is the most urgent need to impress the lessons of the Great War. We might be permitted to paraphrase Kipling and say – ‘The tumult and the shouting dies. The captains and the kings depart. We build Gateways to Sacrifice Lest we Forget! Lost Aye Forget!’ The idea hit upon so happily by Taonui’s Committee might well be adapted for many country schools, none of which is so far inland that it escaped a tribute of sacrifice on the part of its old boys in the war. And in the city, also, these Memorial Gateways would tend to prove standing object lessons to the young people of how great a part Now Zealanders played— over 100,000 men went forth out of a population of just one million souls in the Dominion. In the unveiling of the memorial yesterday, Taonui set a fine example to other parts of New Zealand to erect similar Gateways to Sacrifice.”*

Under the headline *“Municipal Gateway – to Fallen Soldiers of Taonui and Aorangi District,”* the *Feilding Star* of 27 September 1920 (p. 5) then described the ceremony:

*Favoured with fine weather, there was a large attendance of people from Feilding and district at the open-air ceremony yesterday afternoon of officially unveiling the striking Memorial Gateway erected at the entrance to the Taonui School grounds. There were many motor cars drawn up by the roadside. The ceremony took place in the open air, opposite the Gateway, which is erected in the form of an arch, in concrete. On the marble keystone is chiselled the words: ‘In Memoriam. Great War. 1914-1918.’ Upon a marble slab set into the left-hand pillar are these phrases: ‘For God, King, Empire, and Freedom’s Cause.’ ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his country.’ The other pillar bears the phrase: ‘They Gave All.’ And then follow the names of the ten men from the district who sacrificed their lives: D. Cunningham, N. M. Douglas, W. H. Dyke, A. C. Koberstein, W. Noble, A.E. Rees, S. Storer, J. Tantrum, J. P. Tunncliffe, and P. Whitlock.*⁶

Feilding’s Salvation Army Silver Band, ever helpful in good work, attended the ceremony, played two selections, and led the singing, under the baton of Mr Tremaine.

Mr. Linklater, Chairman of the Kairanga County Council, who had charge of the ceremony, through the unavoidable absence of Mr Arch. Campbell, Chairman of the School Committee (in whose family there was a bereavement), also read apologies from the Hon. .D. H. Guthrie and Mr Ed. Newman, M.P. Mr Linklater, in a brief and feeling speech, said they had met to do a ceremonial honour to the memory of the men from the district who had given their lives in the Great War that we might have freedom in New Zealand. This Memorial Gateway, erected by the people of the district, was intended to constantly remind the school children as they made their entrances and exits through it of what a sacrifice that war had meant even to Taonui. Our boys and the people of New Zealand had stood shoulder to shoulder during the war period. The speaker hoped the people would see the advantage of being united also during these strenuous times of peace.

Major McLean, M.C., who spoke on behalf of the returned soldiers, complimented the people of the district upon what he considered to be one of the happiest forms of memorials. This district had paid a heavy toll in the war - ten killed out of the 100 men contributed. They had fallen in no mean

⁴ *Feilding Star*, 22 September 1920, p. 5

⁵ *Feilding Star*, 25 September 1920, p. 5 & 27 September 1920, p. 2

⁶ Some names corrected here to match the WWI memorial list.

cause and as part of no mean army. It had been the fashion to decry the British as a decadent race. The Germans did not think so when they came up against the Australians and New Zealanders just four years ago on the Somme, and at the terrible Passchendaele, and in Picardy in 1918, when the colonials, thrust on the run into an awful gap, stopped Fritz's rush, saved Amiens, and did so much towards the abrupt ending of the war. Little New Zealand sent 100,000 men to the war - and jolly good men, too. They made their mark on immortal Gallipoli, in France, and in Palestine. And the New Zealanders would always respond to the call from the Motherland. The Major extended his sympathy to the relatives of the men who had fallen, and he thought the Gateway would impress scholars with the fact that New Zealand produced men that stood even to the final sacrifice for freedom. Mr Geo. H. Harford, Mayor of Feilding, performed the ceremony of unveiling the Gateway and unlocking the iron gate. In a short and impressive speech he pointed out what the memorial stood for, and paid a tribute to the keenness of the young New Zealanders (some even 16 and 17 years of age) to take part in the fight for freedom from Kaiserism. Had these lads not gone, had the Taonui and Aorangi men not sacrificed their planned future, we might to-day have been slaves to Germany. They had fallen in the cause of righteousness, and the Gateway would be a constant reminder to the thousands of boys who would pass through it that it was a privilege to be a British patriot.

'The Last Post,' played by two members of the Band, concluded an impressive and interesting ceremony."

It was subsequently noted that *"the plates upon which the carving has been done on the Memorial Gateway at the Taonui School composed of polished New Zealand granite, from the Nelson district. The work at the gateway was also done by a returned soldier, Mr Jones, of Feilding."*⁷

With the new gateway then in place, the school committee successfully applied to the Wanganui Education Board for a grant for a new front fence for the school that would be in keeping with the style of the memorial.⁸

The memorial became the focus of local Anzac Day services, with the *Manawatu Times* on 29 April 1924 (p. 2) recording the following:

"At the Taonui school yesterday, the pupils, together with those from the Te Arakura school, held a service in commemoration of Anzac Day, Several of the pupils gave recitations appropriate to the occasion.

Major McLean, of Feilding, was the principal speaker, and impressed upon the scholars the idea of playing the game.

Mr Innes, an ex-master of the Taonui School, also addressed the children. The Te Arakura pupils were conveyed in motor cars to Taonui under arrangements made by the school committee."

World War Two saw many other young men from the district depart for wartime service. However, this time only one man was killed. This was Flying Officer William Victor Ferguson, who was killed in action over Europe on 13 June 1943.⁹ His name was subsequently added to the memorial beneath the names of the men killed on WWI - however his surname was misspelt there as 'Fergusson'.¹⁰

⁷ *Feilding Star*, 29 September 1920, p. 2

⁸ *Manawatu Times*, 25 September 1923, p. 2

⁹ Auckland Museum - Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C18512?n=Victor%20William%20Ferguson&ordinal=0&from=%2Fwar-memorial%2Fonline-cenotaph%2Fsearch>

¹⁰ M.H. Durie, *Learn By Doing: A Centennial History of the Taonui School and District 1879-1979* (Feilding, 1979), p. 80; Also: *Evening Post*, 26 July 1943, p. 4, & 17 January 1944, p. 3

The school's swimming baths were subsequently built as a memorial to "those who served", and these were officially opened on 27 November 1954.¹¹

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a rendered concrete arch with keystone supported on rendered concrete pillars and rendered low wall either side. The archway is inset slightly from the road such that the low walls are at a shallow angle. The memorial is completed with two further rendered concrete pillars at each end of the low wall and these join the arch with a steel fence with a matching steel gate under the arch.

"Taonui School" inscribed on the arch which is split either side of the keystone which has a granite plaque with the words "In memoriam Great War 1914-1918". Two further granite plaques are fixed to the pillars supporting the arch. The east plaque is inscribed "For God, King, Empire and Freedom's Cause", "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his country". The west plaque notes the names of the men who died.

The arch form was popular from Roman times where it represented victory. In later memorials it came to represent victory of life or victory in death. Obelisks were the most common design with cenotaphs, gates and arches the next most common.

The archway is an entry to the local school which is located on Waughs Road between Feilding and Bunnythorpe. Surrounding the school is farmland while opposite is the Feilding aerodrome with a number of hangars and ancillary buildings.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an arched gate-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it remains on its original site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in both world wars and where memorial services have been held. It is also sited outside a school, a common location intended to inspire students with the sacrifice of those who died serving their country.

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¹¹ Durie, p. 80

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PHOTOS



Figure 2 Unveiling the Taonui Memorial Gate on 26 September 1920, with the old school house in the background.¹²



Figure 3 The Taonui School pupils pose with the newly-built war memorial in about September 1920¹³

¹² Durie, p. 54

¹³ Durie, p. 64



Figure 4 The reverse of the Taonui School Memorial – looking toward the railway crossing (15 December 2017)

Halcombe School Memorial Gates, 30 Monteith Street, Halcombe



Figure 1 Halcombe School's war memorial gate in Monteith Street (19 January 2022).

Architect:

Builder:

Construction date: 1949

Visible materials: Concrete posts, marble plaques, timber pergola, metal gates

Architectural style: Gateway

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and Compiler: Val Burr 2018; Ian Bowman 2020

Heritage NZ Listing: Nil

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Halcombe School's war memorial takes the form of a pergola, with three pairs of concrete pillars, a pair of iron gates, and with a wooden framework overhead. The names of the dead of both world wars are recorded on marble slabs affixed to the concrete pillars closest to the road.¹

¹ Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014), p. 32 ; Also: Halcombe School – The War Memorials: <http://www.halcombe.school.nz/warmemorials2016.htm>

Background

It seems possible that the marble tablet listing the former pupils lost in the First World War might be somewhat older than the Second World War tablet. Certainly the text-style of each is different – something unlikely to have occurred if both were made at the same time. The name of L.M. Natzske, which was added later to the WWI tablet, also more closely resembles the style of the WWII tablet. While a search of the school's records would probably add something to the story of the memorials, the available online records offer some indications to that effect. This information was supplied by the *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus'* Halcombe correspondent throughout the war years.

The *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus* of 28 September 1915, p. 7, reveals that the idea of a memorial tablet for Halcombe School came very early on in the war: *"Several of our settlers have intimated their readiness to provide suitable souvenirs for our returned soldiers. And what about those heroic mothers whose boys cannot return? They must not be forgotten. Then what about a tablet in our school for the names of the old boys 'killed in action' and a 'Roll of Honour' placed, say, upon our Post Office? Think it over and evolve something worthy of us, the grateful stay-at-homes."*

Then on October 5th 1915 came: *"Mr C. Natzke of this town has received notice of the death at the front of his young brother, who was born in Halcombe, and whose name we claim to add to our rapidly extending roll of honour."*² Lance-Corporal Leo Max Natzske (26) was the man whose name is tacked onto the bottom of the WWI list of names. However, his family had moved away from Halcombe at the time of his enlistment. He died of wounds at Gallipoli on 28 August 1915.³

The report of 23 May 1916, p. 6, records that: *"At the last meeting of our school committee Mr E. Thomas suggested that a Roll of Honour should be compiled and the names placed upon it of all those boys and teachers who had been connected with the school and who had volunteered for the front. All present approved and it was further suggested that later on a marble tablet bearing the names of all the boys who have left this district for the front should be placed upon our post office. Upon Mr Thomas' list there are over thirty names of Halcombe school boys and teachers who have enlisted."*⁴

Then on 6 November 1917 came: *"The monthly meeting of the Halcombe School Committee was held on Saturday night, all the members attending. After the usual routine business had been transacted, it was resolved to erect in the Halcombe School a Roll of Honour, to contain the names of all boys from this district who had been educated at the school. Mr Laurie Seigel was told off to get the names of our warriors and up to the present he has over 50 on his list."*⁵

Serious fund-raising then came with the announcement on 20 November 1917 of: *"The secretary of the School Committee tells me that arrangements for the social (the official notice of which can be seen in this issue of the Advocate), to be held next Friday, to provide funds for the erection of a roll of honour board, are well in hand. Local and outside vocal talent has been secured. The Halcombe Band will play a fine selection, 'In Memory of the Brave,' a typical piece for the occasion. Ladies are asked to bring a basket (well filled, of course), and if there are any men in this district who won't give a shilling, well they are either very poor or are very parsimonious, which is the polite way of saying something else. The secretary says he will be glad of a ham, if anyone has such a thing on hand,*

² *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 5 October 1915, p. 7

³ Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: 'Leo Max Natzke': <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C11329?n=Leo%20Max%20Natzke&ordinal=0&from=%2Fwar-memorial%2Fonline-cenotaph%2Fsearch>

⁴ *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 23 May 1916, p. 6

⁵ *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 6 November 1917, p. 4(4)

which can be spared. So if any reader of these notes wishes to earn a name for being generous, and also get his or her names in this column now is the time. This latter fact should be worth at least two hams."⁶

The following week the newspaper's Halcombe correspondent wrote a detailed account of the function at the local hall. It had been very well-attended, with the money needed for the Roll of Honour being over-subscribed by several pounds. Amongst the speeches was that of John Morrison, and included in his remarks was the comment: *"In the absence of a public memorial he could conceive of no better way to preserve the memory of our brave soldiers than by placing their names conspicuously before the notice of the children. The board would serve the purpose of keeping before the children's eyes the splendid manner in which former scholars of that school had rallied to the standard which called them to war, and he was quite sure the lesson conveyed would be productive of nothing but good. He would like to see a roll of honour board in all schools..."*⁷

Although the war still had another ten months to run, in January 1918, the Halcombe correspondent wrote: *"I was privileged a few days ago to see the Roll of Honour Board, which our School Committee are going to place in the school. It is a fine piece of work, and great credit is due to all concerned in its production. The board is about four feet long by two feet nine inches wide, with heavy moulding at the top. It is stained black, and the lettering is in gold. At present more than 60 names have been placed on the board and there are more to follow. Mr E. Thomas is procuring the names of the soldiers entitled to appear on the Roll of Honour, and has already gone to a deal of trouble in a matter which is proving one of considerable difficulty. It is intended to unveil the board when the school opens."*⁸

There is no indication in the two books⁹ that cover Halcombe's war memorials as to what became of this wooden WWI Roll of Honour board. However, presumably the marble tablet for the dead ended up replacing it at the school. The people of the Halcombe area also began fund-raising for the main war memorial in the middle of Halcombe after this time, and that memorial was eventually unveiled on 27 July 1921. Both the school memorial and the main town memorial name only those who lost their lives during the war. Thus the wooden Roll of Honour with its sixty-plus names still had a role to play as a community record, wherever it ended up.

The Unveiling of the Pergola Memorial

The idea to build the present memorial pergola and gates traces to a successful concert held in the Halcombe Hall on 20 September 1946. This concert had raised about £30 for school purposes. At this time *"the idea for the Memorial Gates was first brought before the school committee by Mr W. Powell. An appeal for funds was launched, to be followed by a house to house appeal."*¹⁰

On 2 May 1949, *"The school committee received a letter from the (Wanganui) Education Board asking for plans of the Pergola Memorial and that the work be suspended until the Board's approval be secured, (At this stage the Memorial was practically completed.)"* On May 24th the Memorial Gates were officially unveiled, and *"Members of the School Committee, R.S.A. and a fair attendance of parents were present. These gates commemorate the past pupils who gave their lives in the two World Wars."*¹¹

⁶ *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 20 November 1917, pp. 5 & 8

⁷ *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 27 November 1917, p. 4

⁸ *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 8 January 1918, p. 4

⁹ Olsen & Doyle; and Sarah Rolston, *Halcombe Heroes: World War One* (Feilding, 2015)

¹⁰ *Halcombe School 1877-1977* (Halcombe, 1977), p. 22

¹¹ *Halcombe School 1877-1977* (Halcombe, 1977), p. 23

The *Manawatu Standard's* Halcombe correspondent then reported the following in its issue of 2 June 1949: "Owing to the unsuitable weather conditions on Anzac Day, the unveiling of the Memorial Gates at the Halcombe School took place on Empire Day, May 24. The Rev. H.R. Wright addressed the children and residents. Mr Page unveiled the names of the men who lost their lives in World War I and the names of the men of World War II were read by Mr H.M. Monk."¹²

There are fifteen names of former pupils who were killed in World War One, and a further ten were killed in World War II. While not researched in any depth for this study, of the fifteen from WWI, eight are also named on Halcombe's main war memorial at the intersection of Stanway Road and Willoughby Street. These are J. Cuff, W. Cuff, N. Hogg, C. Seigel, J. Seigel, F. Voss, C. Wapp and H. Wishnowsky. This number included two sets of brothers, the Cuffs and the Seigels. A third pair of brothers, the Lintons, appears on the school list only.¹³ Only two former pupils are listed on both war memorials for WWII. These are W. Clapham and P. Te Punga. Harry 'Cautley' Clapham on the WWI list, was almost certainly an uncle of William Courtley Clapham on the WWII list.¹⁴ The brothers Alexander Walter Crozier and Noel Henry Crozier both served in the RNZAF and were killed nine months apart in the European war.¹⁵

Recent Years

As the centenary of the First World War approached, a decision was made to publish the stories of the men from that war who are named on the town's two war memorials. The *Manawatu Standard*, of 18th May 2012, then published an article entitled: 'Honouring Halcombe's heroes'

An annual grant of \$2,700 from Manawatu District Council and the 2014 Gallipoli centenary have prompted Halcombe Community Committee to research the names on the Halcombe School memorial archway and the cenotaph in the village.

Sarah Rolston has set herself the task of tracing the names of soldiers whose names are recorded on the two memorials, and try to source photographs of as many as possible.

The annual grant to community councils is to be used by community committees for a project such as this one, signs or seats which the community consider will benefit their community.

"The idea of producing a booklet with photos of the soldiers and a little about each one, was prompted by a similar project undertaken by George Kereama for Maori Battalion soldiers. Researching local soldiers in the Feilding Library, I came across a book by the Feilding Agricultural High School Old Pupils Association in 1948 which lists a number of the same names, which has given me a head start."

One of those former pupils was Hamuera Paul Te Punga, who had been dux of the school, a rugby hero and was training as a lawyer when he enlisted. He left New Zealand with the Maori Battalion in 1939, and returned but then went back and held the rank of Major when he was killed in Italy on September 23, 1944.

¹² *Manawatu Standard*, 2 June 1949, p. 9(6)

¹³ Rolston: pp. 19-22, 32-35, 49-52

¹⁴ William Courtley Clapham (1917-1942) was the son of William John Clapham of Halcombe, who in turn is almost certainly the same as William John Ward Clapham (1876-1953), son of Lambert and Maria Clapham, who in turn were also the parents of Harry Cautley Clapham (1892-1918). (Sources: Births, Deaths & Marriages online references, including Birth: 1876/7084, 1892/1719 & 1917/7593; Marriages: 1903/259 & 1916/4326; & Deaths: 1918/79924, 1945/64590 [ref to death on 14 November 1942], 1953/27801 & 1963/27915. <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>)

¹⁵ Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: Noel Henry Crozier (NZ411742) & Alexander Walter Crozier (NZ415549): <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph> [Then search their names]

"He was easy to research, because he was well known. But other soldiers will be harder to find out about. Some will still have family in the area, but others may not be known now, particularly WW1 soldiers. The Crozier brothers were also in the book, but less was known about them."

Mrs Rolston has some information about 11 of the names, but would be interested to hear more of their stories.

She intends to make use of the Manawatu District Community Archives to search for more information about the names on the memorials, and has been given a few names of people who may have more information.

Mrs Rolston describes herself as an adopted New Zealander, and her knowledge of New Zealand's military history is very limited. She said finding out about these soldiers is intriguing.

"Some names are listed on both memorials, such as J Cuff, yet WM Cuff¹⁶ is only listed on the cenotaph and not at the school. Maybe that means he was an older brother, cousin or uncle who did not attend Halcombe school. It would be interesting to hear those stories."

Among the names on the memorials known to be still in the area is Natzske (since changed to Nitschke), Cowdrey, Te Whare, Gotty, Wapp and Sandilands.

"At the Halcombe Anzac service this year I was told the first soldier to die at Gallipoli was from Halcombe. I would really like to know more about that," Mrs Rolston said.

There are 40 names listed on the two arches and Mrs Rolston would be grateful for any information about these soldiers.

They are 1914-18: C Clapham, L Clover, J Cuff, W M Cuff, N Hogg, R Linton, W Linton, A Palmer, C Phillips, C C Seigel, J A Seigel, F Voss, C Wapp, H Wishnowsky, L M Natzske, M H Hogg, A Cowdrey, R Fearon, J Hammond, W McDonald, A Neilson, P Roberts, W Tua.

1939-45: W Clapham, L Calman, A Crozier, N Crozier, P Elliott, A Gillon, J Neilson, J P O'Dea, B Sandilands, F Boddington, E Campbell, J H Davey, D Gotty, B Hogg, T Rewai, P Te Punga, J Te Whare.

If photographs of the soldiers can be obtained, the intention is to reproduce, frame and hang them in a public space within the village, possibly the rugby clubrooms or the school hall.¹⁷

The book *Halcombe Heroes: World War One* was duly published in 2015.

The memorial has been restored in recent years, including the installation of a new gate. The timing of the various Google Street View images indicates that this work was undertaken between February 2010 and October 2013.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises three pairs of rendered concrete posts with a timber pergola structure above forming a gateway into the school. There are marble plaques, one each on the front posts and metal gates. On the eastern plaque are the names of those who were killed in World War One with the names of those who died in World War Two on the western plaque. On the front rafter are three plaques, on the east is "1914-18", in the centre is "Remembrance" and on the west "1939-1945".

The pergola entry design of the memorial is not common. Most entries to schools were in the form of an arch. A brief on-line search found only the Te Awamutu and District War Memorial Park that includes a pergola structure.

¹⁶ Both Cuffs are in fact named on the school memorial

¹⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 18 May 2012: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/your-manawatu/feilding-herald/6945111/Honouring-Halcombes-heroes>

The archway is an entry to the local school which is located on Monteith Street to the south of Halcombe. Surrounding the school is farmland with scattered housing. The main war memorial for Halcombe is located at the junction of Stanway Road and Willoughby Street to the south of the village centre.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as an example of a pergola styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period. However, it is a **rare** example of this memorial type.

The memorial has **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many war memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and World War Two.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it remains on its original site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in both world wars and where memorial services have been held. It is also sited outside a school, a common location intended to inspire the students with the sacrifice of those who died serving their country.

SOURCES

Printed Sources

Manawatu Standard, 2 June 1949, p. 9(6) [Microfilm, Palmerston North City Library]

Olsen, Peter, & Doyle, Janet, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014)

Rolston, Sarah, *Halcombe Heroes: World War One* (Feilding, 2015)

Online Sources

Auckland War Memorial Museum: Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/> [Search the various people's names]

Births, Deaths & Marriages: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> [as per footnote]

Google Street View <https://www.google.co.nz/maps/> [as per references in text]

Halcombe School and District: Diamond Jubilee 1877-1937 (Feilding, 1937)

http://www.halcombe.school.nz/index_files/Halcombe%20School%20Diamond%20Jubilee%201937.pdf

Halcombe School 1877-1977 (Halcombe, 1977)

http://www.halcombe.school.nz/index_files/Halcombe%20Centenary%201877%20-%201977.pdf

Halcombe School – The War Memorials: <http://www.halcombe.school.nz/warmemorials2016.htm>

Halcombe School memorial gates', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/halcombe-school-memorial-gates>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 15-Jul-2013

Manawatu Standard, 18 May 2012: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/your-manawatu/feilding-herald/6945111/Honouring-Halcombes-heroes>

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus* [as per footnotes and text])

Other Sources

Val Burr's research file for No: O1 Halcombe War Memorial – researched for Manawatu District Council in 2016



Figure 2 This photo is from the NZ History website and appears to date to 2010. Since it was taken, the gate shown in the photo has been replaced. (Source: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/halcombe-school-memorial-gates>)



Figure 3 The two lists of names of pupils lost in the two wars, with fifteen lost in WWI and ten in WWII. The name of L.M. Natzske appears to have been added later. Its print-style appears more like style of the WWII tablet. Possibly the WWI plaque is somewhat older than the WWII plaque, although no information to that effect was found during this study. (Source: NZ History: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/halcombe-school-memorial-gates>)

SOCIAL

In Aid of Funds for the erection
of a "ROLL OF HONOUR" Board
in the Halcombe School

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23rd
at 8 p m.

ADMISSION TO SOCIAL :
Gents 1s, Ladies a Basket
DANCE TO FOLLOW.

R. C. ORR, Secretary.

Figure 4 Advertising a fundraiser for the school's Roll of Honour (Source: *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 20 November 1917, p. 8)

Colyton War Memorial, 397 Colyton Road, Colyton



Figure 1 The Colyton War Memorial with St. Andrews' Anglican Church in the background (on 29 October 2016).

Architect:	Unknown
Builder:	F J Jones, Feilding
Construction Date:	1919
Visible materials:	Painted concrete stepped base, stepped grey Coromandel granite plinth, black Aberdeen granite shaft
Architectural style:	Obelisk
Use/building type:	Memorial
Date and Compiler:	Val Burr 2018; Ian Bowman, 2020
Heritage NZ listing:	Nil
Proposed ranking:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Colyton's War Memorial stands on the front part of the section occupied by St. Andrew's Anglican Church. This piece of the property also serves as the church's carpark. The memorial was unveiled on 28 September 1919 by Brigadier-General Meldrum, G.M.C. D.S.O., and it carried the names of twenty fallen soldiers from the area. Of special note is the fact that this unveiling ceremony was the first of its kind for the district. The memorial was built by Feilding monument mason F.J. Jones, and it was installed at a cost of £234.12.0.¹ An additional two names were added after the Second World War.

The property's Certificate of Title (WN76/100) was issued to The Wellington Diocesan Board of Trustees on 5 January 1895, with St Andrew's Anglican Church being built in 1896 to the design of Frederick de Jersey Clere. The Board remains the current owner of the property.

¹ *Feilding Star*, 1 July 1919, p. 2, 16 July 1919, p. 3, 26 September 1919, p. 2, 29 September 1919, p. 3, 10 October 1919, pp. 2 & 3, 3 March 1920, p. 3 ; *Evening Post*, 30 September 1919, p. 4

Planning the War Memorial

In June 1919, when the people of Feilding were in the early stages of planning their town's war memorial, a conference held there heard that Ashhurst, Bunnythorpe, Colyton and Halcombe already had separate memorial schemes in hand, and that money was already being subscribed toward the construction of these memorials. That left only Mangaone and Makino to combine with Feilding toward Feilding's memorial.²

The *Feilding Star* of 1 July 1919 recorded the following: *"The Anglicans of Colyton have decided for the community what form that district's memorial to the boys who fell in the war should take, and already the people throughout the district have given so generously to the fund that the erection of the memorial is assured. It is to take the form of an obelisk, upon which will be graven the names of the 13 Colytonians who gave their lives for the cause of freedom. Of these 13, eleven were Anglicans."*³

The Unveiling Ceremony

The *Feilding Star* of 26 September 1919, recorded that: *"On the monument erected at Colyton in memory of the men from that district who laid down their lives in the great war, no less than 20 names are inscribed —an exceptionally large percentage for so small a community. Brigadier-General Meldrum, C.M.G., D.S.O., is to unveil the monument next Sunday afternoon, and all returned soldiers are cordially invited to be present at the ceremony. General Meldrum is well known along this Coast, as for years before the war he was captain of the Hunterville Mounted Rifles, who were grouped with the mounted men of this area. He did splendid work during the war, and was a Main Body man."*⁴

The actual unveiling ceremony was described in detail in the *Feilding Star* of 29 September 1919 (p. 3):

"The unveiling ceremony of the memorial to the Colyton soldiers who laid down their lives in the war took place yesterday afternoon. The ceremony was performed by Brigadier-General Meldrum, G.M.C., D.S.O., in the presence of a large gathering. Archdeacon Innes Jones conducted the religious service, and the Feilding Salvation Army Band led the singing.

"The memorial takes the form of an obelisk. It is placed on the Anglican Church grounds, and contains the names of all the Colyton boys who laid down their lives in the war. On a massive concrete base which goes three feet into the ground is placed a block of Coromandel granite, and above this is the obelisk, of Aberdeen granite. The top stone stands diagonally to the road. On one of the forward sides is a scroll with the words— 'For King and Country,' on the other the words—'For Justice and Liberty.' The list of names, in raised lettering, occupies two sides of the obelisk base. The list is introduced thus:

"Erected by their relatives and friends in honour and in loving memory of the following who gave their lives for King and Country in the Great War, 1914-1918:

"Corporal L. Young, Corporal V. Chowen, Corporal W. Astridge, Corporal C. Hills, Private D. Gray, Private S. Jones, Private J. Bussell, Private G. Rundle, Private H. Hughes, Private H. Beechy, Private J. Allerby, Private J. Bray, Private R. Curtis, Private C. Clapham, Private G. Allerby, Private G. Ashworth, Private S. Smith, Private C. Entwistle, Private L. Allerby, Private A. Brown.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends - John 15-13."

"The service opened with the National Anthem, followed by prayers and the hymn: 'To God we lift our voices and sing with one acclaim. While every heart rejoices to praise His Holy Name.'

"ADDRESS BY MR. W. G. PEARCE: Mr. W. G. Pearce, representative of the district on the Oroua County Council, and one of the oldest settlers, gave a short address. He had, he said, had something to do with giving welcomes to boys who had returned from the war and there was considerable pleasure in such gathering, but this was a new experience. He hardly knew how to give expression to his feelings,

² *Feilding Star*, 27 June 1919, p. 2

³ *Feilding Star*, 1 July 1919, p. 2

⁴ *Feilding Star*, 26 September 1919, p. 2 (Also the unveiling advertisement: 26 September 1919, p. 3, col. 3)

but he felt it a duty to be present. They all wished to do honour to their heroic dead, and he desired to extend a word of sympathy to the friends of the boys whose names were inscribed on the memorial stone. He knew what their feelings were because three from the inner circle of his own family had gone.

"When," said Mr Pearce, "one looks back over the five years of the greatest war in history and thinks of the hardships, trials, sufferings, strenuous effort, thirst and hunger, anxiety, heat and cold, mud and discomfort, one wonders what is the meaning of it all. As far as I can see, it was all brought about by selfishness and greed on the part of our enemies. The Kaiser and his Government had never learnt the Second Great Commandment. 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'"

"Now that the victory has been won, we need to look forward instead of backward, and try and learn by the experience we have passed through. The Right Hon. Lloyd George said recently we were at the dawn of a new day. Now is our opportunity to remake the world. Although the victory has been won, at present we see unrest and turmoil, strikes and profiteering. This is not what the boys laid down their lives for.

"We want a better world, where all will have an equal chance, where every man shall look on the other as his brother whom he shall, find pleasure in helping. We want a world where the extremes of riches and poverty shall come to an end, where the basis of our laws and lives will be - Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

"It is up to us who have been spared to 'do our bit' towards making this new world, not to follow the example of the Kaiser in making self the first, last, and only consideration but rather that we fear God, honour the King, and love our neighbours as ourselves.

"We read recently," concluded Mr Pearce, "that the German people proposed to erect a monument to commemorate the war. On one side they proposed to give the number of their soldiers who had given their lives; on the second the number of maimed; on the third a reference to the sufferings of the women through the war; but they did not know what to put on the fourth side. On our national monument we can have on three sides mention of our dead, our wounded, and our sufferers, and on the fourth— praise God for it —Glorious Victory." Kipling's Recessional was then sung.

"GENERAL MELDRUM. Brigadier - General Meldrum, C.M.G., D.S.O., said he was very pleased and very much honoured to be there to unveil the monument to the Colyton boys who had fallen in the war. Soldiers were not supposed to be men of words, and perhaps if the spirits of the boys whose names were on the monument could speak to them, and they were asked what they wished to say, they would reply: "We simply did our duty, and that is all there is to it." But it was a right and proper thing that such a lasting record of what those boys did should be erected, it was an honour to the fathers and mothers of those boys. What the boys had done would have been remembered without the memorial, but it had this special use, that it was above all things a reminder to the young of what the boys had done. By their sacrifice a standard had been set, and this would act as a spur and an impulse to the coming generation as they viewed the records.

"Wars will come again," said the General. Mr Pearce reminded us Mr Lloyd George had said we are at the dawn of a new day. But a new day dawned when the Son of Man was born into the world, and wars have taken place over and over again since then. We as New Zealanders and as members of the British Empire should see that we are able to hold what we have. Those boys gave up their lives for the sake of the rights and liberties of New Zealand and the Empire. Those who come after them should be ready to do at least as well to keep New Zealanders free men.

"There was no country of its size that had made a finer or higher record than New Zealand in the war. This is a great country, and the war had shown we could breed great men. If they tried, they could still keep up the standard, and then the New Zealanders would never lose New Zealand.

"If I can do so without boasting, let me say one word for those Colyton boys who fought under my command. They belonged to a Regiment that never once failed to do anything asked of it. They never failed to take any position they were ordered to take, and they never lost any position they held and never gave up any position except when ordered to do so as part of a general withdrawal. The history of New Zealand's share in the war was being prepared, and when it was published the record of what our boys had done would be found to be a very impressive one.

“He wanted to say, too, that the New Zealand boys never objected to the dangers and trials of the war. If there was any grouching and grumbling, it was when there was nothing doing. But the greater the danger and the harder the conditions, the more cheerful the boys became, the more willing, and the better they did things, and this went far to make everything successful.

“The New Zealanders were all comrades. It did not matter what unit a man belonged to or what rank, wherever one New Zealander met another he knew he met a comrade. These 20 lads whose names are on this monument were comrades of mine in the war and I think it a very high honour that I have been asked to unveil this monument.

“As General Meldrum unveiled the monument, he said: ‘To the Honour of God and to the heroes whose names are recorded here, I unveil this monument.’

*“The Salvation Army Band played the Dead March in ‘Saul,’ and the ‘Last Post’ was sounded by Bandsman W. Craven”.*⁵

Subsequent Events

On 29th April 1935, the *Manawatu Standard’s* Colyton correspondent reported that: *“Many beautiful wreaths were placed on the war memorial in the Anglican Church grounds at Colyton on Anzac Day, although no service was held.”*⁶

The *Manawatu Standard’s* Colyton correspondent subsequently reported on the Colyton Women’s Institute, in the edition dated 16 October 1939. This stated that: *“Mrs Barltrop, of Feilding, gave a demonstration on the art of making wreaths, the beautiful wreath which she made being afterwards placed on the Soldiers’ Memorial.”*⁷

Following the Second World War, an additional two names were added to that blank fourth side of the memorial that Mr W.G. Pearce had referred to in his speech during the aforementioned unveiling ceremony in 1919. These were⁸:

- Private John Bassett, formerly of Spur Road, Colyton (but of Hamilton when he enlisted) who was killed on Crete on 20 May 1941, aged 20.
- Flight Sergeant Ernest Howard Lankshear, who went missing while on an air operation from Malta on 21 April 1943, aged 25.

Dell Adsett, in her book *A Township like Ours* (p. 97), described the activities in the district during the Second World War: *“Finally, two more names were added to the war memorial. This time they were to the memory of Sgt. Ernie Lankshear (RNZAF) and Pte. Jack Bassett. At the unveiling ceremony wreaths were laid as a final gesture to these young men who had spent most of their brief lives at Colyton School.”*

Recent Years

In about 2012, retired Colyton farmer, Peter Olsen, set about a two-year project to restore the district’s fifty-seven war memorials – including the Colyton memorial. His motivation was that while he had no relatives who had served in the First World War, he was interested in it, and he wanted the memorials to be in a better condition for the centenary of the Gallipoli landings. He found that many of the monuments had been moved or broken, and in some cases the names were no longer legible. In all, he found sixteen stone and granite obelisks, eight gateways and thirty-three wooden memorial boards.

⁵ *Feilding Star*, 29 September 1919, p. 3: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/FS19190929.2.22> and <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/FS19190929.2.23>

⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 29 April 1935, p. 10

⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 16 October 1939, p. 5

⁸ Auckland Museum, Online Cenotaph Database: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph>

The memorials Olsen worked on ranged from Rangiwahia to Pohangina, and from Feilding to Himatangi Beach. They were located in schools, community halls, private properties and community centres. Most were near schools, and so some schools undertook their own restorations.

An additional part of Olsen's project was the publication of the book, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District*, which was published in 2014.⁹

The South African War Memorial – For Information Purposes

A marble memorial on the back wall of the nave of St. Andrew's Church, preserves the memory of Trooper Arthur H. Harrison who died in the South African War in 1901. Its inscription reads: "N.Z.M.R., Erected by the residents in the district, in memory of Trooper Arthur H. Harrison, 2nd Contingent, New Zealand Mounted Rifles, who died of fever at Naaspoort, South Africa, (on) 22nd Feb. 1901, aged 24 years. Gone but not forgotten."

The newspaper record indicates that the tablet had originally been installed, with full sincerity and compassion, in the Nikau Wesleyan Church on 30 June 1901. However, that church is now long gone, and apparently the tablet was eventually discovered lying under a hedge - where it had evidently lain for many years. As a result of the discovery, the tablet was retrieved and in around the 1980s or 1990s it was installed in St. Andrew's. The marble tablet is in the shape of a Gothic arch and is embellished with carvings of crossed flags, a mounted rifleman and (what appears to be) a wounded soldier with a levelled rifle. The mason and sculptor was a Mr Dowdall of Palmerston North.¹⁰

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises an obelisk of black Aberdeen granite, a stepped plinth of grey Coromandel granite and a base of three painted concrete steps. The obelisk and plinth is at 45 degrees to the concrete base.

The names of the twenty soldiers killed in World War One are inscribed on the memorial and two more names were inscribed from World War Two. On the shaft of the obelisk are inscribed the following: "For King and Country", "For Justice and Liberty", "Erected by their relatives and friends in honour and in loving memory of the following who gave their lives for King and Country in the Great War A.D. 1914-1918", "Greater love hath no man that his, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15.13".

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most

⁹ Peter Olsen & Janet Doyle, *Communities Remember World War One: Memorials of the Manawatu District* (Feilding, 2014), p. 2; *Manawatu Standard*, 19 August 2014: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/7497139/War-memorials-will-be-back-to-best>

¹⁰ *Feilding Star*, 27 February 1901, p. 2, 28 February 1901, p. 2, 4 July 1901, p. 2; *Manawatu Standard*, 27 June 1901, p. 2; 'Colyton War Memorial' (re a visitor's comment from 2012 located beneath the main text), in 'New Zealand History': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/colyton-war-memorial> [Ministry for Culture and Heritage]

common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare¹¹.

The memorial is located on the road forecourt of St Andrews Church on Colyton Road. To the east and opposite are a small cluster of houses, comprising the settlement of Coyton while the remainder of the setting is farmland.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as, unlike many war memorials, it has been retained on its original site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those from Colyton who died in two world wars and one that is sited in front of a church.

SOURCES

Printed Sources

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Google Street View <https://www.google.co.nz/maps/> (as per caption)

Manawatu District Council: Maps <https://maps.mdc.govt.nz/IntraMaps90/default.htm> (as per caption)

Manawatu Standard, 19 August 2014: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/7497139/War-memorials-will-be-back-to-best>

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Evening Post, Feilding Star, Manawatu Standard*) - (as per footnotes and text)

Other Sources

¹¹ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

Manawatu District Council: Certificate of Title for this property; Also Manawatu District Council Heritage File: 'C 9, St Andrews Anglican Church, Colyton' (2017)

IMAGES

COLYTON WAR MEMORIAL FUND.				
BALANCE-SHEET.				
Receipts.		£	s	d
Subscriptions	...	234	12	0
		£234	12	0
Expenditure.		£	s	d
F. J. Jones	...	197	15	0
Preparing Site	...	14	15	0
Fence	...	14	14	3
Donation S.A. Band	...	1	1	0
Printing	...	2	1	3
Photos for Relatives	...	4	0	0
Sundries	...	5	6	
		£234	12	0
Audited and found correct. Samuel Shepherd.				

Figure 2: *Feilding Star* 10 October 1919, p. 3



Figure 3: Peter Olsen of Colyton, cleaning up the Colyton War Memorial in the course of his project to clean up the region's war memorials (Source: *Manawatu Standard*, 19 August 2014: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/7497139/War-memorials-will-be-back-to-best>)



Figure 4: The Colyton War Memorial – in November 2018. The crosses doubtless were put in place to coincide with the 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day on 11th November 2018. (Source: Google Street View <https://www.google.co.nz/maps/>)



Figure 5: The First World War dead – pictured prior to the memorial's restoration (Source: 'Colyton War Memorial' in: 'New Zealand History': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/colyton-war-memorial> [Ministry for Culture and Heritage])



Figure 6: The Second World War dead – pictured prior to the memorial’s restoration (Source: ‘Colyton War Memorial’ in: ‘New Zealand History’: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/colyton-war-memorial> [Ministry for Culture and Heritage])



Figure 7: The South African War Memorial tablet now inside St. Andrew’s Church, Colyton, that originally was in the Nikau Wesleyan Church. It was photographed by Bruce Ringer in 2018 (Source: ‘South African War memorial tablet, Colyton’, in ‘New Zealand History’: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/south-african-war-memorial-tablet-colyton> [Ministry for Culture and Heritage])



Figure 8: The St. Andrew's Anglican Church property, showing the memorial at the lower left of the photo, and near the road frontage of the section (Source: Manawatu District Council: <https://maps.mdc.govt.nz/IntraMaps90/default.htm>)

Cheltenham War Memorial, 1460 Kimbolton Road, Cheltenham



Figure 1: The Cheltenham War Memorial – showing the WWI names and the base of the flagpole (15 December 2017)

Architect:

Builder:

Construction Date: 1919

Visible materials: Concrete stepped base, stepped and chamfered granite plinth and obelisk

Architectural style: Obelisk

Use/building type: Memorial

Date and compiler: Val Burr 2018; Ian Bowman 2020

Heritage NZ Listing: Nil

Proposed ranking: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The Cheltenham War Memorial originally stood alongside St. Paul's Anglican Church in Kimbolton Road a short distance beyond the village in the direction of Kiwitea. The three-tiered polished granite obelisk, which lists the names of ten men from WWI and four more from WWII, was unveiled on 9 November 1919. With the unveiling of this memorial, St. Paul's became the first church in the district to have a war memorial.¹ However, with the closure of the church, the memorial was removed to a small reserve adjoining Kimbolton Road, Cheltenham, in the direction of Feilding and close to the turn-off onto the Cheltenham-Hunterville Road.

The First Site of the Memorial

¹ Heritage New Zealand: 'St. Paul's Church, Cheltenham': <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/7284>

St. Paul's Church was designed by Frederick de Jersey Clere, built in 1904, and in due course consecrated on 3 November 1907.² It stands on a hill, with a concrete staircase leading up to it. Near the top is a landing, and it was upon this landing that the war memorial once stood. It is possible, based on the report of the unveiling ceremony that is quoted below, that this staircase was especially built to accommodate the memorial. The matter would require further investigation.

The Unveiling Ceremony

The *Feilding Star* of 10 November 1919 (p. 2) covered the unveiling ceremony in detail the day after the event:

"The memorial stone erected in honour the soldiers of the Cheltenham district who fell in the war was unveiled yesterday by Brigadier-General C.W. Melville, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

"The memorial, which is in the form of an obelisk of polished granite, on a concrete base, has been placed on the Church of England section at the village, on the rise just before the church, and concrete steps lead up to it from the gate.

"The following names appear on the stone: —

"In memory of: Trooper R. Booth, Rifleman W.B. Bruce, Lance-Corp. John Burrell, Private James Dillon, Lance-Corp. S.J. Hunt, Lance-Corporal David Love, Corporal S.G. Madgin, Lieutenant G. D. Mayo, Private H.S.D. Stewart, Private F.W. Taylor.

"Under the names follow the words: 'From the Cheltenham district, who nobly gave their lives for freedom and justice in the Great War, 1914-1919.'

"There was a large assemblage at the ceremony from all parts of the district. Mr M. A. Conway presided, and said the purpose of the gathering was to honour the names of the noble men who had fallen in the war for freedom and justice."

The crowd had been addressed by the Rev. J.F. Mayo (the church's vicar), who remarked that the memorial was not so much for the sake of those living now, as for their children and their children's children. *"Those living now could hardly realise how much those who had given their lives had done for them. Try to imagine what the consequences would have been if the war had not been won..."*

The unveiling of the memorial was then undertaken by General Melville, who noted that a number of men named on the memorial had served under him.

Thereafter a special medal was given by Mr M.A. Conway to the next of kin of each fallen soldier - given on behalf of the people of the district. These had been especially designed for this purpose by Alfred Drury, R.A., a noted British sculptor.³ The newspaper report then described the design of the medals in detail, adding that: *"It was a most touching scene as the mother of each dead hero came forward and received the medal."*⁴

The *Manawatu Herald* of 11 November 1919 (p. 2) reported on one of the men who was related to a Foxton local. He was *"Corporal Sidney Madgin, brother of Mrs Freeman, of Paxton, who enlisted from Cheltenham on August 5th, 1914, and died of gas poisoning on May 24th, 1915. Mrs Freeman received a memorial medal. These medals depict Britannia succouring and crowning with a wreath of laurel a dying hero who still clings to the flag for which he has given*

² *Manawatu Standard*, 24 August 1968, p. 8

³ For example, the work of sculptor Alfred Drury on the Queen Victoria Memorial in Wellington: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/NZH19320511.2.22.4?query=Alfred%20Drury> ; Also Alfred Drury (1856-1944) *Wikipedia*:

<http://www.victorianweb.org/victorian/sculpture/drury/index.html>

⁴ *Feilding Star*, 10 November 1919, p. 2

his all. In the background can be seen the 'setting sun,' indicative of departing life, the whole being surmounted by the simple yet touching words, 'Lest we forget.'..."

The Second World War

Following WWII, the names and inscriptions of four more men lost to that war, were added to the obelisk. This latter work had been paid for by the Cheltenham Patriotic Society, with the balance of what they had raised, being used toward the upkeep and maintenance of the memorial. Later two lights were installed alongside it. Until services were discontinued at the church, Anzac Day services were held at the memorial every year, with large attendances.⁵

Relocation

St. Paul's Anglican Church was deconsecrated in 2001 and in due course sold.⁶ This will have triggered the transfer of the war memorial to its present location. A signature impressed into the new concrete base indicates that the relocation work was undertaken by the firm Jones of Palmerston North. Photos taken of the memorial at the present site (which was then still largely unplanted) are shown on the nzhistory.govt.nz website with the date credited as "c2005".⁷ Certainly the memorial was in this location by March 2008. A flagpole was also installed alongside the memorial at some point between January 2013 and May 2015 – the dates when the Google Street View van passed by and photographed the site.⁸

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a granite obelisk, granite stepped and chamfered plinth and a concrete base.

The names of ten men from WWI and four more from WWII are inscribed on the memorial.

The obelisk form originated in Egypt where it was considered to be a ray of sunlight made solid and that God existed within the structure. The word obelisk is Greek meaning a prong for roasting and indicated protection, defence and stability. With about one third of all WWI memorials based on the obelisk design, it was the most common design. Cenotaphs, gates and arches were the next most common. A number of memorials included marble human figures while domed cupolas and crosses were rare⁹.

The memorial is located on the east side of Kimbolton Road in a fenced enclosure with a small bridge access from the road. Opposite and to the north is the small rural settlement of Cheltenham. The surrounding setting is farmland.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low to high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

⁵ Thompson, Joyce, *A Short History of the Cheltenham Rural District of Feilding, New Zealand* (24-page typed booklet published circa 1990), p. 12-13. Note that Thompson states that the WWII names were unveiled on the memorial at Anzac Day on 25 April 1943 (p. 13), however the inscription refers to the 1939-1945 war, suggesting an error with Thompson's unveiling date.

⁶ Susan MacLean, *Architect of the Angels: The Churches of Frederick de Jersey Clere* (Wellington, 2003), p. 58

⁷ NZ History: 'Cheltenham War Memorial': <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/cheltenham-war-memorial>

⁸ Google Street View images of the memorial dated 2008, 2013 and 2015.

⁹ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/memorials-and-monuments/page-4>

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an obelisk-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One and Two.

The memorial has **moderate authenticity** as it has been relocated from its original site.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those from Cheltenham who died in two world wars and one that is sited in its own enclosure off a public road.

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NZ History: 'Cheltenham War Memorial'

<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/cheltenham-war-memorial> ; and 'Cheltenham School Roll of Honour' <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/cheltenham-school-roll-honour>

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Feilding Star*, *Manawatu Herald*, *NZ Herald*): (as per footnotes and text)

Wikipedia: 'Alfred Drury':

<http://www.victorianweb.org/victorian/sculpture/drury/index.html>

IMAGES



Figure 2: The Cheltenham War Memorial in its original location, when photographed in about 1986 by Jock Phillips and Chris Maclean. (Source: NZ History: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/cheltenham-war-memorial>)



Figure 3: The former St. Paul's Anglican Church, Cheltenham. The memorial formerly stood at the top of the concrete steps leading to the church. (Source: Google Street View, February 2010)



Figure 4: The Cheltenham War Memorial – showing the WWII names – 15 December 2017

Awahou South Memorial Arch, 16 No 4 Line, Ashhurst



Figure 1 The war memorial in about 2015: (Source: <https://www.historypin.org/en/first-world-war-centenary/walking-with-an-anzac/geo/-40.177013,175.811919,18/bounds/-40.178249,175.810617,-40.175777,175.813221/paging/1/pin/1007718/state/hybrid>)

Architect:	Unknown
Builder:	Awahou South community
Construction Date:	Summer holidays 1922-23
Visible materials:	Painted concrete, marble plaque
Architectural style:	Arch
Use/building type:	Memorial
Date and Compiler:	Val Burr 2019; Ian Bowman, 2020
Heritage NZ Listing:	Nil
Proposed ranking:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Awahou South School opened on 8 September 1902 with a roll of twenty children. The one teacher employed to teach in the single classroom school, was charged with teaching children who had a ten-year age range. The school had been needed due to the difficulties faced by the children of the area when they tried to reach the other schools available to them. The winding road leading to the area, was particularly bad in winter when it was prone to slips and washouts. To reach the other schools required fording the Pohangina River, but when the river was in flood, that was not a possibility. In response to this dilemma, a group of Awahou South settlers made arrangements to establish their own school – this small school and its pony paddock being the result.

Over the years, the school's roll fluctuated, with 32 children being there in 1907. However, such changes as farm amalgamations reduced the roll, and it was forced to close between 1929 and 1931, and then again between 1936 and 1944. During those periods the local children attended Raumai or

Awahou North Schools. The school eventually closed permanently in December 1971.¹ Its pupils and those of Komako School were then relocated to Awahou North School, which was duly renamed Awahou School.

In her book, *Awahou School Centenary 1894-1994: A Pohangina Valley History*, Lois Hall writes: “World War One had a cataclysmic effect on the valley which it took years to recover from. There were large numbers of young men, many still at home working on the farm – the first generation of children to grow up there and most of them responded to the call enthusiastically. The lure of adventure and a change from mundane daily routine, coupled with the feverish patriotism of the time made for an irresistible combination. Some never came back. A few returned to take up duties on the family farm where they left off. Others, such as Con Spelman took advantage of farms provided for rehabilitation purposes.”²

The War Memorial

Although no report or indication of an official unveiling ceremony for the memorial was located in the course of this study (although doubtless there was one), some important information does survive. For example, the *Manawatu Standard* of 10 August 1921 (p. 2) describes an “excellent concert” undertaken by the school children – along with some of the local talent - in order to raise funds “for a roll of honour board for the school.” By special request, a second concert for the same goal, was also held on Wednesday, 7th September 1921.³

A comment in the *Manawatu Standard* of 13 November 1922 (p. 3) provides the best information of the construction of the Awahou South structure: “The plans of the war memorial for the Awahou South School provide for an ornamental gateway at the main entrance. It will consist of two pillars of reinforced concrete, together with an overhead beam also in concrete. Marble panels will contain the school roll of honour. The funds for the memorial were obtained by the pupils of the school by a series of entertainments held a little over a year ago. It is understood that the work will be carried out during the school holidays.”

This suggests that the pupils will have started the 1923 school year with the new memorial gateway in place. There is nothing available to indicate if there was also a wooden honour board inside the school as originally planned.

The Men on the Memorial

Given that almost five decades have passed since the tiny school was operating - and over a century since the war service the archway memorialises – it is practical to look at who these men were.

The marble plaque at the centre of the overhead crossbar or the archway lists fifteen names of former pupils. These include three sets of brothers (Callesen [x2], Spelman [x3] and Spelman [x2]), while the two Hunts were possibly paternal cousins, certainly their mothers appear to have been sisters. However, the three branches of the Spelman family were definitely cousins. Of the others, only ‘C. Thomas’ remains unconfirmed on either the Auckland Museum’s Cenotaph database or in reports of Awahou South School events.

‘Leo Bailey’ was in fact Frederick Leo Bailey (b. 1895), one of at least nine children of Charles and Caroline Amelia Bailey. Charles was chairman of the school committee in 1908, at which time the three

¹ *Manawatu Standard*, 5 May 1972, p. 1

² Lois Hall, *Awahou School Centenary 1894-1994: A Pohangina Valley History* (Palmerston North, 1995), p. 79
Note that Con Spelman, who is named on the memorial, was hospitalised with malaria while in Egypt.

³ *Manawatu Standard*, 5 September 1921, p. 1

youngest Baileys were pupils at the school, and Leo was named in 1908 and 1910 as attending the school's annual picnic.⁴ His name does not appear on the Cenotaph database, as he did not serve in the NZ military services. He became a motor mechanic in Palmerston North, and in January 1916 he sailed independently for England with the intention of joining the Imperial Motor Transport Service, before leaving for active service at the Front. He subsequently received a position in the Aviation Corps, and by April 1916, was based on the western front. He died in New Zealand in 1954, aged 59.⁵

The **Callesen brothers**, August (b. 1890) and Arthur Herman (b. 1893), were the sons of Danish-born Volle Callesen and his German/Polish-born wife Emma, nee Damler. Volle Callesen was the brother of Hans Callesen, who had settled at Karere in 1868.⁶

The next two are the ones who were killed - Despite being named on the memorial as "C.W. Hunt" and "H Dicken", these two men were in fact George William Hunt and Henry George Dickin, both of whom were killed in 1917. Their fathers had both been on the school's committee in 1904, with Herbert Dickin being the chairman.⁷

Corporal George William Hunt was born in 1895 to William and Ellen Hunt (nee Morris), who had married in 1894. Ellen Hunt, nee Morris, and Elizabeth Hunt, nee Morris, appear to have been sisters – their parents being John and Peterneil/"Peter Nell" Morris. Members of the Hunt family had lived in the area since around 1888. William Hunt had leased out his farm in about January 1915, and while his wife Ellen appears to have remained at Raumai (perhaps living with her sister?), William Hunt had moved to Palmerston North.

On 26 July 1917, the *Manawatu Times* published a letter from William Hunt condemning the way he considered that land was being squandered by "letting it go wholesale" to men who had returned from the front through sickness. He wrote that: "I have a son at the front, a farmer, and about a dozen nephews." He wondered if there would be any land left for them when they returned. The very next day, his son (George William Hunt) was killed in action at Ypres, Belgium. He had been in the Wellington Infantry Regiment. The *Manawatu Standard* of 18 August 1917 (p. 1) reported George William's death, describing him as the "only son of Mrs W. Hunt, Raumai, aged 21 years, 11 months." William Hunt died at Stratford in 1940, and Ellen Hunt died at Napier in 1954. The couple also had daughter, Olive Lilian (born 1899) who had also attended the school.⁸

Private Henry George Dickin was born in 1894 to Herbert and Margaret Ann Dickin (nee Bowman). As well as being on the school committee, Herbert Dickin had been the chairman of the Pohangina Road Board (1893-94); a councillor for the Awahou Riding on the Pohangina County Council; and also chairman of that council (1894-1902).⁹ However, by the time Henry sailed for Europe in June 1917,

⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 5 February 1908, p. 2 & 8 February 1910, p. 7; Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> Ref: (Births) 1895/12197

⁵ *Evening Post*, 6 January 1916, p. 8; *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 7 January 1916, p. 4; *Manawatu Standard*, 15 April 1916, p. 5; Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Deaths) 1954/34983

⁶ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Births) 1890/10110 & 1893/3086; Val A. Burr, *Mosquitoes & Sawdust: A history of Scandinavians in early Palmerston North & surrounding districts* (Palmerston North, 1995), pp. 111-112; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph> (& search 'August Callesen' & Arthur Herman Callesen')

⁷ *Manawatu Standard*, 30 April 1904, p. 2

⁸ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Marriages) 1894/2368, (Births) 1874/42708 [Ellen Morris/Hunt], 1895/18633, 1899/1968; *Feilding Star*, 12 January 1915, p. 3; *Manawatu Times*, 26 July 1917, p. 6, 24 September 1928, p. 6; *Manawatu Standard*, 18 August 1917, p. 1, 22 April 1940, p. 1; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search 'George William Hunt, WWI'); Napier City Council:

<https://www.napier.govt.nz/services/napier-cemeteries/cemetery-database/?rid=108523> (Ellen Hunt)

⁹ Feilding Photos: PEO:in249, Feilding Library: <https://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/18335>

the family were living in the Auckland area. Henry was a member of the Auckland Infantry Regiment at the time he was killed in action in Ypres, Belgium on 20 November 1917 – only three months after he reached England, fresh from New Zealand.¹⁰ Then on 10 April 1918, his father Herbert died while visiting Honolulu. He had reportedly taken his only son's death very hard.¹¹

Henry Dickin's story did not, however, end there. In 1996, when at the time an Auckland funeral home was being cleared for sale, Henry's medals and 'Death Penny' were discovered behind the company's safe. Not knowing what to do with them, the retiring funeral director took them to Australia with him, before returning them to NZ in 2012 in the hope that someone could find a relative of Henry's to give them back to. By this time Henry's mother was dead (in 1958, aged 93), as was his married sister, Mabel Annie Lewis (in 1978), and his unmarried sister Georgina Mary (in 1984). Mabel had married in 1938 aged about forty – and possibly she had no children. In 2014, after some difficulty in finding any of Henry's surviving family, the medals were passed to Henry's great niece, who had previously not known of this branch of the family. The story of this difficult exercise was then published online.¹²

Henry Edward Hunt (b. 1895) was the son of George Henry and Elizabeth Hunt (nee Morris), who had married in 1891. Ellen Hunt, nee Morris, and Elizabeth Hunt, nee Morris, appear to have been sisters – their parents being John and Peterneil/Peter Nell' Morris. George Henry Hunt's 1928 obituary described him as one of the earliest pioneers in the Pohangina Valley, while by that time Henry was living at Kimbolton.¹³

Edward Leamy (b. 1896) was the son of John and Catherine Leamy. He was possibly known at school as 'Ned'. He was a law clerk when he enlisted for military service, at while time he named his next of kin as his sister, Miss M. Leamy, of Raumai.¹⁴

Roy Gipson Millen (b. 1890) was the son of John Gipson Millen and his wife Elizabeth Evangeline (nee Brogden). In 1894, the couple named their daughter 'Vera Colyton Millen' and it transpires that 'Gipson Millen' (as Roy's father was known) had previously been the proprietor of the 'new' Colyton Hotel, which he sold in 1892. Perhaps that marked the point when the family moved to the Pohangina Valley.¹⁵

The **Spelman brothers #1**, John Edward (b. 1891), Cornelius Michael (b. 1894) and Patrick 'Delphin' (b. 1895), were the sons of Patrick and Bridget Spelman – whose other children included four daughters. While the younger two brothers definitely served overseas, the name of John Edward Spelman does not appear on the Cenotaph database. There is some information though. In May 1917, when Delphin withdrew his appeal against being called up (relating to farm work), he did so on the grounds that

¹⁰ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Marriages) 1893/2863, (Births) 1894/2750, *Feilding Star*, 26 October 1894, p. 2; *NZ Times*, 7 December 1917, p. 6; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search 'Henry George Dickin'); New Zealand War Graves Project: <https://www.nzwargraves.org.nz/casualties/henry-george-dickin>

¹¹ *NZ Herald*, 16 May 1918, p. 1

¹² Medals Reunited New Zealand: 'Henry George Dickin – WW1 medals & 'Death Penny' returned to NZ by retired funeral director of closed funeral home': <https://medalsreunitednz.co.nz/henry-george-dickin-ww1-medals-death-penny-returned-to-nz-by-retired-funeral-director-of-closed-remuera-funeral-home/>

¹³ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Marriages): 1891/1572; Births: 1871/2007 [Elizabeth Morris/Hunt], 1892/9970 [Sarah], 1894/17295 [William Henry], 1895/3021 [Henry Edward]; *Manawatu Times*, 24 September 1928, p. 6; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search 'Henry Edward Hunt')

¹⁴ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Births) 1896/16704; *Manawatu Standard*, 8 February 1910, p. 7; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search 'Edward Leamy')

¹⁵ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Births) 1890/17239, 1894/14399; *Woodville Examiner*, 9 June 1892, p. 2; *Feilding Star*, 13 November 1915, p. 2 (mother's death); Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search 'Roy Gibson Millen' [sic]) Note that this database erroneously names him as 'Roy Gibson Millen', but also acknowledges the actual name

John had been rejected as physically unfit for service. In November 1917, John appealed stating that he had been drawn in the ballot in April 1917 and classed at C2. He stated that his father had two farms carrying 700 sheep and 80 cattle, 40 of which were milking cows. The cows were milked by hand, aided apparently by his two teenaged sisters. He had shorn 3,000 sheep in the preceding shearing season. His father (Patrick) could no longer do this work.

In April 1918, John Edward again appealed – stating that he could not serve until one of his brothers returned from active service, as his father could not carry on the business if he went into camp. He was milking 31 cows by hand along with three of his sisters. No other labour was available. The appeal was dismissed, but an extension of time (to May 28th) was allowed. Despite apparently not serving overseas, John clearly undertook a great deal of work around this time, both on the family farm and various roles in the community both then and later (hall committee, Dairy Farmers Union, long-time Apiti-Pohangina Rabbit Board committee member etc.). Presumably the local community wished to acknowledge these things, and also the unavoidable complications that saw him unable to proceed with military service like the others.¹⁶

The **Spelman brothers #2**, Thomas John (b. 1892) and Edward ‘Clifton’ (b. 1895), were the sons of Michael and Margaret Spelman – whose other children included three girls and another son too young to serve in this war. On 2 November 1918, the *Manawatu Standard* (p. 4) reported that both sons were in hospital in Cairo suffering from malaria, and that Clifton’s condition was quite serious. They survived, although they possibly continued to live with the effects of the malaria thereafter.¹⁷

Frederick James Spelman #3 (b. 1895) was the son of Bernard and Mary Spelman, whose other six children included four sons who did not attend the school (one had died as a baby), and two daughters. Bernard Spelman died suddenly at Foxton in April 1908, aged 46, leaving a wife, four sons, two daughters, and also four brothers and a sister living in the Pohangina Valley. The sister appears to have been named Mary, wife of William Baird. Presumably Bernard’s widow Mary and her children moved to Raumai also after her husband’s death. Her older son William Thomas (b. 1891) also served, but as he had not attended the school, his name is not on the memorial.¹⁸

The final name on the memorial, “**C. Thomas**”, could not be traced with any certainty at this time. The best option was a member of the family of “Mr J. Thomas” (also called Rifleman J. Thomas), who was an active member of the Pohangina Defence Rifle Club around 1909-1910, a group that others named on the memorial also later belonged to. It is possible (by an extensive process of elimination) that “C. Thomas” is Charles Edward Thomas (born 1895), a farmhand at Maharahara, Dannevirke, and the son of Rosa Jane and John Robert Thomas.¹⁹

¹⁶ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Births): 1891/18439, 1894/8760, 1895/11455; *Feilding Star*, 30 May 1917, p. 4; *Manawatu Standard*, 5 November 1917, p. 5, 20 April 1918, p. 5, 20 April 1935, p. 12, 29 April 1938, p. 8; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search ‘Cornelius Michael Spelman’ & ‘Patrick Delphin Spelman’)

¹⁷ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Births): 1892/1726, 1895/6521; *Manawatu Standard*, 30 August 1934, p. 7; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search ‘Thomas John Spelman’ & ‘Edward Clifton Spelman’); Their younger brother, Bernard Francis, however, died in 1928 as a result of his motor cycle skidding on the newly-graded metal Ashhurst-Raumai Road and throwing him under a car driven by another Raumai resident (who was also a relative). *Manawatu Standard*, 24 September 1928, p. 6, 3 October 1928, p. 7

¹⁸ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Births): 1891/4399, 1895/11160 [& other family entries, incl. 1882/2477, ‘Mary Spellman’]; *Manawatu Herald*, 7 April 1908, p. 2; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search ‘Frederick James Spelman’ – also ‘William Thomas Spelman’)

¹⁹ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: (Births): 1895/3054; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph (& search ‘Charles Edward Thomas’)

World War Two and Beyond

If the school ever had a Roll of Honour for its WWII former pupils, it certainly was not attached to the memorial archway. The school had been closed between 1929 and 1931, and then again between 1936 and 1944, and so possibly the names of these pupils were installed on the memorials of the other schools they attended during those years – namely the Raumai and Awahou North Schools. Certainly both the Awahou North School commemorative board and the Pohangina Roll of Honour have the names of WWII servicemen. Some of the Awahou South School names also appear on one or the other of those two Rolls of Honour – with the mysterious “C. Thomas” being named on all three.²⁰

The school closed at the end of 1971, along with two other schools in the Pohangina Valley, as part of the Government’s policy to consolidate smaller schools into larger units. Awahou North School was the one designated to receive the former pupils from Awahou South School and Komako School. Meanwhile Raumai School – and Pohangina School when it closed in May 1972 – transferred to Ashhurst School.²¹

The school building was finally dismantled in February 1977, and then on 19 November 1977 it was relocated to the Manawatu Museum in Palmerston North. It was then reopened to the public on 25 February 1981 as an example of a one-roomed school. In 1994 it was relocated to the present museum site – since renamed Te Manawa. It remains on display there.²²

However, the war memorial remained on site at the old school grounds, where it gradually became weathered. It was not unused though, as at an early stage the location was turned into a school bus stop, and a shelter shed was built behind it for children waiting to catch the school bus.²³

Restoration of the Memorial

In about 2012, the old school grounds were purchased by Lee Martin, a civilian member of the Defence Force. After discussion with the Awahou community, Martin decided he wanted to see the memorial rejuvenated – as did the local community. When he mentioned his plans to his work colleagues, the task of restoring the memorial was taken on as a military project instead. About twelve people then turned out to do the work. There was some debate about whether the bus shelter should remain behind the memorial, but as children were still using it, the decision was made to leave it in place.²⁴

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The memorial comprises a memorial gateway leading on the site where the Awahou School once stood. The gateway is in the form of a neo-Classical triumphal arch with simplified Doric columns supporting an entablature. In the centre of the entablature is a marble plaque with the names of the 15 men who served in the war, two of whom are noted as having been killed in action. Above the list are the words “1914—Roll of Honour – 1918”.

The arch gateway form was popular from Roman times where it represented victory. In later memorials it came to represent victory of life or victory in death. Obelisks were the most common design with cenotaphs, gates and arches the next most common.

²⁰ Hall, p. 204

²¹ *Manawatu Standard*, 5 May 1972, p. 1

²² NZ Museums: Awahou South School building ; Whanganui Education Board; 1901; 77/186/1: <https://www.nzmuseums.co.nz/collections/3032/objects/49649/awahou-south-school-building> ; Hall, p. 113

²³ *Manawatu Standard*, 20 March 2015: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/67453600/null>

²⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 20 March 2015: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/67453600/null>

The location of the archway and now demolished school, is on No 4 Line, a road heading east in a narrow valley on the east side of the Pohangina River, some distance to the north of Ashhurst. The area is rural farmland.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The war memorial has **low** to **high local** significance for **architectural, technological, rarity, representativeness, group, authenticity, people, event, pattern, cultural, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values.

The memorial has **moderate architectural** and **technological** values as a good example of an arched gate-styled war memorial using common materials, style and symbolism of the period.

The memorial has **low rarity** but **high representativeness** and **group** values as one of many similar memorials erected throughout the region and New Zealand to remember fallen and serving armed soldiers in World War One.

The memorial has **high authenticity** as it remains on its original site, although the reason for its location, the school, has now gone.

The memorial has **moderate historic people, event, pattern and cultural identity, public esteem, commemorative** and **education** values as a war memorial commemorating those who died in World War One and where memorial services have been held. It was also sited outside a school, a common location intended to inspire students with the sacrifice of those who died serving their country.

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Other Sources

Awahou South School building and its signage – at Te Manawa, Palmerston North

IMAGES



Figure 2: Awahou South School, with pre-1950s gates and the memorial looking unkempt (Source: Copied from the photo on the sign outside the school building at Te Manawa)

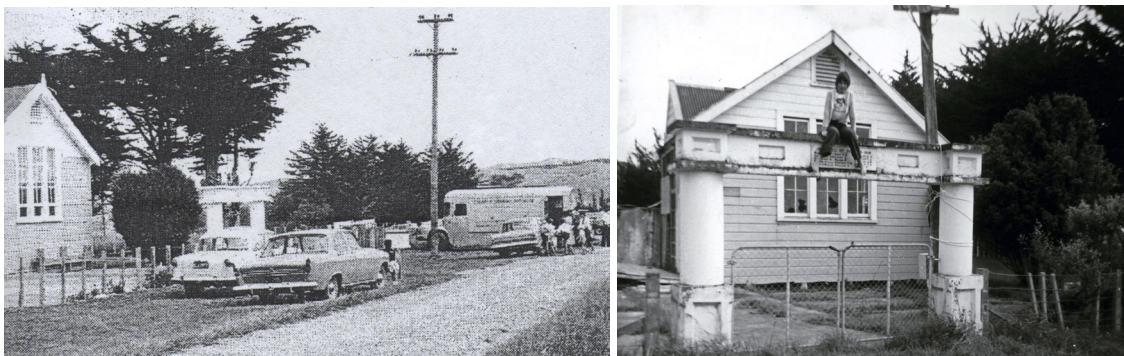


Figure 3: Left: A visit by the Country Library Service bus in the 1960s, judging by the ages of the cars (Source: Hall, p. 110) **Right:** The memorial and the school building at some point between 1972 and 1977 when the building was removed. Note the broken windows and the power pole tied to the memorial's pillar. (Source: Filename: POH:23, Feilding Library: <https://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/17700>)



Figure 4: The memorial apparently fairly soon after the school building was removed in 1977. (Source: NZ History: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/south-awahou-school-template-war-memorial>)



Figure 5: The marble plaque on the Awahou South War Memorial in about 2010 (Source: NZ History: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/south-awahou-school-template-war-memorial>)



Figure 8: George William Hunt – from his file on the Auckland Museum’s Online Cenotaph Database: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph>



Figure 9: Henry George Dickin, cropped from a 1913 BNZ staff photo – and his ‘lost and found’ medals²⁵

²⁵ Medals Reunited New Zealand: ‘Henry George Dickin – WW1 medals & ‘Death Penny’ returned to NZ by retired funeral director of closed funeral home’: <https://medalsreunitednz.co.nz/henry-george-dickin-ww1-medals-death-penny-returned-to-nz-by-retired-funeral-director-of-closed-remuera-funeral-home/>



Figure 10: This photo shows the teacher and pupils at Awahou South School in January/February 1907, and also nine of the fifteen boys named on the war memorial. They are: **Back row:** Mr Best (Teacher), **Georgie Hunt**, **Leo Bailey**, **Tom Spelman**, **Con Spelman**, Jack Leamy, **Arthur Callesen**, Billy Hunt, **Henry Hunt**. **2nd Row:** **Delph Spelman**, **Cliff Spelman**, Susie Bell, Peggy McKenzie, Annie Spelman, Norah Callesen, Annie Millen, Annie Callesen, Eileen Lynch. **3rd Row:** Agnes Spelman, Adele Spelman, Olive Hunt, Gay Spelman, Bessie McKenzie, Violet Kruse. **Front row:** Tom Leamy, **Edward Leamy**, Leslie Hall, Fred Callesen, David (Harry?) Kruse, Bernard Spelman, Tui (Oscar) Callesen, Wally Bailey, Victor Bailey. (Source: Manawatu Heritage: <https://manawatuheritage.pncc.govt.nz/item/fc0a8734-12aa-4213-9fba-f10cd390f33f>)