



Aotea Memorial Canoe, Egmont Street

1933

Use	Memorial	Historic Value	4 out of 5
Materials	Timber, concrete, paua shell for decorative purpose	Architectural Value	1 out of 4
NZHPT Registered	Not registered	Technical Value	1 out of 2
Valuation No	12440-172-00, 12440-173-00	Symbolic Value	3 out of 3
Legal Description	Pt Blk XXXVII Town of Patea	Rarity	2 out of 2
		Townscape Value	2 out of 2
		Group Value	1 out of 2
		Overall Cultural Heritage Value	14 out of 20
Reference	E3		

Description

The Aotea Memorial Canoe is 16.8 metres long and is mounted on top of a concrete structure. The memorial was the gateway to the second Patea Town Hall, which was pulled down in 1981 for structural reasons. The memorial is constructed primarily of concrete with paua shells in the shape of diamonds set into the beams of the concrete base. Whole paua shells are set into the beam which supports the canoe on the framework.

History

The canoe commemorates the settlement of the area by Turi and his Hapu, who travelled from Hawaii to Kawhia and then overland to Patea. The unique memorial to the great navigator was unveiled on 2 April 1933 by the Hon J A Young, Minister of Internal Affairs. The erection of the memorial was due to the efforts of Mr Panenui, Mr Tupito and Mr Wakarua, who after working on Jubilee celebrations came up with the idea and helped to raise funds by holding a display of Maori Culture at Pukekura Park in New Plymouth. The money raised formed the nucleus of the Turi Memorial Fund. The memorial was erected at a cost of £500, and the Maori Trust Board arranged for the balance of the funds. The original carved figures were made of punga tree trunks.

In recent years the concrete fence in front of the memorial has been removed and the area surrounding the canoe tidied up as part of the urban upgrade.

There are marble plaques on either side of the canoe on the structure.

The plaque to the left, written in capital letters, reads:

“HE TOHU WHAKAMAHARATANGA
TENEI NA NGA URI E NOHO NEI I RUNGA
I TENEI MOTU I AOTEAROA
MO O RATOU TUPUNA MO
TURI ME RONGORONGO
ME TA RAUA WHANAU ME TO RAUA OPE”

The plaque to the right, also in capital letters, reads:

“THIS IS A TOKEN OF REMEMBRANCE
ERECTED BY THE DESCENDANTS LIVING
THROUGHOUT AOTEAROA OF THEIR
ANCESTORS TURI AND RONGORONGO
THEIR FAMILY AND FELLOW VOYAGERS
ERECTED 1933.”

Architect

Possibly Jones Brothers, Monumental Masons, Hawera.

Builder

Jones Brothers, Monumental Masons, Hawera carried out the intricate carving of the prow of the canoe.

Sources

Patea and Waverley Press, Friday 4 August 1933.

Date

January 2000

Information added in November 2002.