

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.

SOURCES

Printed Sources

Kilsby, Dorothy, & Capill, Colin, *Hiwinui: 1891-1991* (Palmerston North, 1991)

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

Online Sources

Auckland Museum, Online Cenotaph Database: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph>

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

Hiwinui School, 'RockinRoom3': <http://hiwinuiroom3.blogspot.com/2015/08/anzac-day-at-hiwinui.html>

'Hiwinui School', Education Counts: <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/find-school/school/population/year?district=®ion=&school=2364>

Manawatu District Council: Maps: http://www.mdc.govt.nz/online_services/find_it/district_maps

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers>: *Manawatu Standard, Manawatu Times* [as per footnotes]

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)