Whanganui is one of New Zealand’s most interesting and distinctive places to visit with a rich cultural heritage spanning Māori and early European settler generations.

As one of New Zealand’s oldest towns you cannot explain Whanganui without understanding a little of its history and this is evident in the numerous heritage buildings and attractions to be found. While there are many historical sites to be visited we have featured here those within an easy walk around the city centre. Allow an hour and a little more if you wish to stop at one of our many cafés and eateries or add an amble through the River Traders and Whanganui Farmers Markets if you’re visiting on a Saturday.

Architecture from many eras is a major feature of Whanganui. Victorian and Edwardian treasures co-exist with fine examples of mid-twentieth century modern architecture. Marae, homesteads, memorials and civic buildings provide a strong sense of place and identity and the concentration of significant heritage buildings found here is rare in New Zealand.

Discover the stories yourself or take a guided tour. Stay a little longer with us and experience all Whanganui has to offer.

Tēnā koutou katoa.
Whanganui is filled with numerous sites of historical significance both to Whanganui iwi and early European settlers. For more detailed information and guidance seek out the specialists at our libraries. We hope to provide you with a few options in this brochure so you can select the best way for you to enjoy our rich cultural heritage and history.

Thanks and appreciation goes to Mainstreet Whanganui Inc. and the Alexander Heritage and Research Library for providing information. We would also like to acknowledge the work of the late Wendy Pettigrew, founder of the Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust, whose tireless research has left a rich legacy of Whanganui settler history.

www.mainstreetwhanganui.co.nz
www.whanganuiheritagetrust.org.nz
North and South Moles

A ‘mole’ is a massive structure, usually of stone, used as a pier, breakwater, or a causeway between places separated by water. The word comes from Middle French, ultimately from Latin mōlēs, meaning a large mass, especially of rock.

The North and South Moles constructed of local shell rock were part of the harbour development which commenced in 1908 to improve the depth of the river mouth. By 1929 the wharves had been completed and the South Mole was over a kilometre long (3320 feet) and the North Mole close to 600 metres long (1940 feet).

Construction of these moles at the mouth of the Whanganui River has altered the adjacent coastline substantially in the last 100 years. Erosion of down-drift beaches slowed, sediment deposits grew for up-drift beaches and depths were deteriorating by the 1930’s. Present conditions at the harbour entrance are now possibly not unlike those encountered by early settlers!

Whanganui Old Cemetery

Commonly known as Heads Road Cemetery, this is one of the oldest European cemeteries in New Zealand. Although officially closed, burials still take place in family plots. The first recorded burial was for James Bailey in November 1843 who had drowned in the river, but there is no headstone marking his grave.

Monumentalists were few in those early days however stonemason Robert Gray was advertising his services in newspapers by the early 1860’s. He imported sandstone from Sydney directly shipped to Whanganui. The sandstone has not weathered well with some of the headstones so eroded they are no longer legible.

Whanganui Regional Museum has copies of the Pūtiki Mission registers which document some of the earliest burials and transcriptions of headstone inscriptions. Records from 1870 are available from the Aramoho Cemetery office although the Catholic records prior to 1920 are not very informative. All of this information is available on microfiche at the Heritage Room at the Alexander Library.
Access from Anzac Parade, Whanganui (Parking by the City Bridge traffic lights) or Tower Crescent, Durie Hill, Whanganui.

Durie Hill Elevator

A special treat going back in time! The Durie Hill Elevator was built to provide residents of the garden suburb easier access to the growing city. Built in 1919, access is through a long pedestrian tunnel and then you’re welcomed aboard the elevator for the 66 metre ride to the top and it only costs $2! In the early days it was just a shilling for a child and another shilling to take the bicycle as well. For a little more you can purchase a small souvenir card with all the details. It is one of only two in the world and saves you the challenge of climbing the 191 step walkway (maybe take the walkway on the way down perhaps!)

As you shake and wobble to the top keep in mind the spectacular panoramic views you’ll be rewarded with at the top. Looking out over the city bridge, Whanganui River and out to the sea, this is one of the best views in the district.

Durie Hill Memorial Tower

Having made the trip up the Durie Hill Elevator the Memorial Tower stands adjacent and for those willing to climb the spiral of another 176 steps, even more impressive views can be seen. This tower is a real testament to the builders of the time. The tower is the official Whanganui Memorial to those who died in the First World War and is constructed of cemented marine sandstone containing shell fragments (simply called shellrock) from a nearby quarry. It is 33.5 metres high and the rock is estimated to be more than 2 million years old.

On a clear day you can see the South Island, Mount Ruapehu and Mount Taranaki.

Tower Crescent, Durie Hill, Whanganui

Red Lion Inn

An hotel has been on this site since the early 1860’s and was used for many years as a stop by Cobb & Co. coaches leaving for Turakina, Wellington and later Upokongaro.

Two fires have been recorded in early history – one in 1864 with the Fire Brigade crossing the river in a punt to fight a stables fire. Other firefighters and the manual appliance were stationed at the York Stockade (Cooks Gardens) only to find the punt gone and unable to put the fire out.

The second fire in 1874 suffered the same results due to a shortage of men able to tow the manual pump, the fire appliance and hose reel without delays. This time however the hotel and stables were lost.

The present hotel was built in 1934 and now features a café and public bar, a fine dining restaurant and function rooms. www.redlioninn.co.nz

15 Pūtiki Drive

‘Braeburn’

Overlooking the Whanganui River on Pūtiki Drive is the Tudor style three storey building ‘Braeburn’. It was built in 1913 by a syndicate of Whanganui journalists as a private hotel no doubt to support the shipping and tourist trade of the time. During the Second World War it was used as a Tactical Training School for the Army and in 1949 was converted into a number of privately owned apartments.
St Paul’s Memorial Church at Pūtiki

Built in 1937 and unremarkable from the outside, it is the inside that is amazing. One of the finest examples in New Zealand of a fusion Māori and European architecture, the interior incorporates outstanding examples of Māori carving, tuku tuku wall panels and kowhaiwhai rafter designs.

Sir Apirana Ngata first took part in the discussions about the proposed new church at Pūtiki, and was closely involved with the work of the carvings from 1936 onwards. He arranged for carvers and supervised the work, and designed the tukutuku panels behind the altar which were prepared in Wellington and presented to the church by women from Ngāti Pōneke. Hohaia (Joe) Mokaraka (Te Tai Tokerau), Hoani (John) Metekingi (Pūtiki), Pineamine (Pine) Taiapa (Ngāti Porou), Iotua Taringatahi (Charlie) Tuarau (Cook Islands), and Wi Te Parihi (Kaikohe) were the church carvers.

Oriwa Haddon was responsible for the kowhaiwhai painting on the rafters in the church, and the work was completed by Jack Kingi from Gisborne. Tawhai Takoko from Tikitiki on the East Coast supervised the kakaho reed work on the ceiling of St Paul's. The kakaho stalks were cut from the Kokohuia Wetland at Castlecliff. Arthur Cutler from England was the architect and builder of St Paul's and died in Whanganui in 1951.

The church also has two fine English stained glass windows in memory of local parishioners and clergy.

Photography is not allowed in the church. Tours can be booked at the Whanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre.

Cameron Blockhouse

A timber blockhouse built in 1868 is a rare surviving example of a privately constructed redoubt from that era. John Cameron built the blockhouse for the protection and refuge of his family. The floor is of compacted earth, double-skinned tōtara walls were filled with clay to protect against bullets and the threat of fire, and the roof was corrugated iron.

Designed to withstand about 24 hours siege, the blockhouse was sited to enable visual communication with two other blockhouses between this site and the York Stockade in Whanganui. Fortunately it was never attacked.
Travelling the scenic Whanganui River Road from the city to Pipiriki takes a leisurely 2 to 4 hours depending on your choice of stops and photo opportunities. This is an authentic journey back in time. Local iwi heritage, remnants of early European settlement and historic landmarks feature amongst the stunning views.

Look out for St Mary’s Church at Upokongaro famous for its unusual 3-sided spire. Stop at the Aramoana Summit at 230 metres above sea level to look down the river and out to Mount Ruapehu. Don’t miss the amazing Oyster Cliffs on the side of the road where layers of fossilised oysters lined sea beds and can now be seen. Travel through the historic and beautiful marae and villages of Ātene, Koriniti and Matahiwi – please ask for permission before visiting a marae as these are treasured places.

Kawana Flour Mill is tucked away off the road but worth the stop with a small restored building and museum.

Rānana is the next community as you travel through to Hiruharama (Jerusalem), previously home to two historically famous figures, Mother Mary Joseph (Suzanne Aubert), and acclaimed New Zealand poet James K. Baxter. Halfway to Pipiriki there’s a great photo opportunity of the Omorehu Waterfall and then before you know it you’ll be at Pipiriki – our gateway to Whanganui National Park and the famous ‘Bridge to Nowhere’.

Pick up a detailed Whanganui River Road Guide from the Whanganui i-SITE or download from www.visitwhanganui.nz to plan your tour of this unique part of the country.
Thain’s Warehouse

The Whanganui I-SITE Visitor Centre began its days in 1895 as Thain’s Warehouse and was designed by architect Alfred Atkins. Built on reclaimed land by local builder Nicholas Meuli, it was designed to complement the Foster’s building next door being the same height and with matching cornices. It was ideally placed given its proximity to the Town Wharf. Thain’s was an import company then described as one of the leading hardware businesses in New Zealand and a reminder of the significant role Whanganui once had as a distribution centre for goods in the Central and West North Island.

With a range of owners utilising the spacious area until 2009, the Whanganui District Council chose to create a new Visitor Information Centre on this part of the riverbank and awarded a design contract to Void Architecture with Mark Southcombe the architect. Original features retained from the old building are the floor, columns, beams and skylight.

‘Mable’, the Number 12 Tram

The Tramways Wanganui Trust moved the roof of the bright red tram shed to this location as part of a restoration and reintroduction of Whanganui trams. Until 1950 Whanganui’s tram network carried passengers between the outer suburbs, the beach and the CBD. Opened in 1908, Whanganui was the first provincial town to have a tramway, twelve trams were commissioned by the then Mayor Mackay. Today you can see the beautifully restored number 12 tram housed in this shed, gifted to the city by David Harre.

The Museum also contains the Tingey Wagon, built about 1900, specifically for the transportation of crates of glass from the Whanganui Wharf to the Tingey Glass premises in Victoria Ave. www.tramwayswanganui.org.nz
Original called the *Aotea* and restored by Project Waimarie, the *Aotea* was brought to New Zealand as a kitset in 1899. In 1902 she was purchased by Alexander Hatrick’s Company. A. Hatrick and Company developed the Whanganui River as a tourist route attracting numerous visitors in the early 1900’s. By the end of 1911, the company had 12 large vessels and seven smaller craft operating on the river. Renamed the *Waimarie* (meaning peaceful waters in Māori), the *Waimarie* sank at her moorings in 1952. She was salvaged from the mud directly in front of Hatrick’s Wharf in 1993 and restored to her current state.

She is now an iconic visitor attraction in Whanganui with regular summer sailings and hosts special events and charters. Tickets for sailings can be purchased at the i-SITE or the Riverboat Museum. While on board you can experience shovelling the coal to keep the steamer moving or try your hand at piloting this very special vessel.

[www.riverboats.co.nz](http://www.riverboats.co.nz)

Operating out of the old Wanganui Rowing Club building erected in 1898 and extended in 1905 is the Whanganui Riverboat Centre. The centre was established to support the restored *Waimarie*, New Zealand’s last coal fired paddle steamer. Inside the building is a river boat museum containing documents, photographs and memorabilia of the Whanganui River and the river boat era.

Group visits to the centre are welcome although bookings in advance are preferred.

Another riverboat available for public excursions is the MV Wairua. Motor Vessel Wairua was built in London by Yarrow & Company and joined the famous Hatrick & Co River service on the Whanganui River in November 1904. After many years of faithful service on the river above Pipiriki, MV Wairua sank in 1938. Many thought she was gone forever. In 1987 MV Wairua was salvaged and over the next 19 years she was restored to her former glory.

MV Wairua operates scheduled cruises from October to April and Personalised Charters year-round.

[www.whanganuiriverboat.co.nz](http://www.whanganuiriverboat.co.nz)
Moutoa Gardens / Pākaitore

This area is known to Whanganui iwi as Pāikatore (Paikatore to some); it was the site of a fishing village and gathering place occupied by Whanganui hapū (tribes) from up-river at various times throughout the year. Following European settlement it became known to them as Market Place and was used by both Māori and Europeans for trading. With the establishment of the town it remained as a sanctuary and gathering place for Māori.

In 1965 the ‘Moutoa Monument’ to commemorate the battle of Moutoa Island was erected by townspeople, grateful that the battle had averted an attack on the town. In 1872 the perimeter of the area was planted with trees.

Although it continued to be used as the landing place for up-river hapū into the 1890s that was eventually stopped and in 1900 the area became known as Moutoa Gardens. It was then developed into the public gardens that exist today. Over the years other monuments have been erected there commemorating Māori including other war memorials to Māori soldiers.

In 1995 Whanganui hapū gathered once more at this site to protest their alienation from the land. This protest resulted in a formal relationship being established in 2001 between Whanganui iwi, Whanganui District Council and the Crown for the management of Pākaitore / Moutoa Gardens.

Wanganui Repertory Theatre

This single storey building was opened in 1882 as the Wanganui Library on land made available by the Government. It was extended twice in the 1890s. In 1933 a new library was opened on the hill in Queen’s Park and the building then became home to the Wanganui Repertory Theatre Company. Continuing a strong performing arts tradition within Whanganui the theatre is still used regularly for amateur dramatic productions and can be hired as a venue.

www.wanganuirepertorytheatre.co.nz

Meteor Printers

This collection of buildings was built in 1902–1908 and for many years housed the offices of the Waitotara County Council. The large wooden buildings also once housed the office of Whanganui Mayor Charles Mackay whose contributions to the city are still evident today in the form of the Sarjeant Gallery, The Dublin Street Bridge and the Number 12 Tram.
Continue along Ridgway Street, crossing into Drews Avenue.

### Decorative Building Facades

Built last century this collection of buildings in Ridgway Street is a fine example of late Victorian and Edwardian architecture. They include The Loyal Wanganui Lodge building at No 32, the Barnicoat, Treadwell and Gordon building at No 34, and the Empress Building, built on the site of the earlier Empress Theatre at No 36, whose beautiful and original interiors are still largely intact. The Lodge building was built in 1895 and the Empress in 1916 with Barnicoat, Treadwell and Gordon’s 1910 offices in the Edwardian era.

At the intersection of Ridgway Street and Victoria Avenue

### Rutland Building

Located on this site since the early 1850s, The Rutland became one of the nation’s best known hotels last century. Fire wreaked havoc in the Rutland on Christmas Day 1868, completely destroying the hotel which was rebuilt, only to suffer from fire again in the 1880s. The current building was constructed between 1899 and 1904. In the early 1990s it was redeveloped to include retail shops, offices and a bar. On entering, note the elegant black and white tiled entry, the courtyard at rear where stables once were and the inset of crockery shards and tiles.

Now home to the Rutland Arms Inn, accommodation and dining is available. Take a break on your tour if you wish and taste one of the 25 different local, imported and craft beers available.

www.rutlandarms.co.nz

At the intersection of Ridgway Street and Victoria Avenue

### The Watt Fountain

This fountain in the middle of the intersection was built as a memorial to William Hogg Watt, the first Mayor of Whanganui. Mayor Watt donated Lake Westmere, then on his property, to the town in order to increase water pressure and make fighting fires easier. The fountain was first unveiled on this site on 7 September 1881. It was then removed in 1906 to make way for the new trams that travelled along Victoria Avenue, first to Cook’s Gardens and then to Queen’s Park in 1933. In 1993 as part of the redevelopment of the town centre the fountain was returned here to its original location. Lake Westmere is now a public reserve.

Turn left down Victoria Avenue

### BNZ Bank Building

The first BNZ building on this site was built in 1867, a two storey wooden building erected but set on fire accidentally. This later building, an impressive commercial building with strong classical form and detailing, was erected in 1906. The BNZ opened for business in New Zealand in 1861, the Whanganui branch on 19 August, 1862. Now home to Element Café Bistro and Venue the building has a unique ambience and character.
Looking directly across the road

Kitchen’s Building

The Kitchen’s building has links to the township’s first pharmacy, ‘a small affair’ established in Taupō Quay in 1858 by Mr W.T. Owen. This pharmacy moved to larger premises on this site and was operated by five different pharmacists until Mr Kitchen bought it. Erected in 1909 the building remained in the ownership of the Kitchen family until 1981. The original pharmacy occupied the full street depth, with residential accommodation at the back on the ground floor and on the first floor. Stables, lawns, gardens and a laundry were at the rear, with a copper for the family washing.

Cross at the pedestrian crossing and return up Victoria Ave to the Watt Fountain corner

Drew’s Building

The Drew’s building was erected in 1909 by the family of Mr S.H. Drew, a manufacturing jeweller and founder of the Whanganui Regional Museum. Drew started business in Taupō Quay where he laid the foundation for his jewellery and watchmaking business. He died suddenly aged 57 when ‘he dropped down dead in his shop.’ Natural history and ethnology fascinated him and he made an extensive private collection ‘illustrative of the colony.’ His collection was purchased in 1892 to form the nucleus of a Whanganui Museum collection in what is now the Savage Club Hall in Drews Avenue. Later, money was raised to build a new regional museum on the present site in Queen’s Park.

The Post and Telegraph Building

Erected in 1902 this building was once the premises for a General Post Office and the Post and Telegraph Service. It replaced the original timber post office of 1870 and was extended after fire damage in 1881. The new building held a staff of 105 with 12 operators working in the upstairs telegraph room. Whanganui was then the terminus of the cable across Cook Strait from Cable Bay near Nelson and the terminus of the Trans-Tasman Cable. Messages from all over the world were received there, relayed to Whanganui and then sent on to cities in the North Island. After 1940, when the new post office opened next door, this building was used by a variety of Government departments until its renovation as a café and restaurant, now Big Orange Café and Ceramic Lounge.

http://bigorange.co.nz
Turn left into Ridgway Street, continuing along Ridgway Street to the next intersection. Turn right into St Hill Street.

The Royal Wanganui Opera House

Built in 1899 this Opera House is one of New Zealand’s last surviving Victorian theatres and the only theatre in New Zealand to have a Royal Charter awarded for the centenary celebration in 1999. It was designed by Wellington architect George Stevenson and commissioned to commemorate Queen Victoria’s reign. It was close to the then railway station and the port – the preferred methods of transport by the theatre companies, and has survived three fires. Constructed in five months and unusually for the period, was lit from the beginning with electricity and gas.

Since its opening the Opera House has gained national and international recognition for its beautiful architecture and great acoustics. Still used today for live performances of touring and local artists and shows, take time to treat yourself to some entertainment in a very special building.

www.royaloperahouse.co.nz

Outside and looking up to your right

The Bell Tower

This six metre high Bell Tower stands on the site of the old York Stockade, one of the defences for the town in its early days. By 1870 the stockade had fallen into disrepair and was sold in 1871. In its place a signal station was built with a tower alongside housing a fire bell. Each night the fire brigade watchmen would climb to the top of the tower and when a fire was spotted ring the bell. The number of strokes indicated where the fire was burning. In 1891 the first tower was replaced with this current tower and the original 1874 Sheffield fire bell moved into it. In the early 1930s the Post Office tower was condemned and a new home had to be found for its chiming clock. The four bells and chiming mechanism were rehoused here.

Continue along St Hill Street

Cook’s Gardens

The hill in Cook’s Gardens was the site of the fighting pā (fortified village), Patupohau. Māori from Taranaki occupied this site while tribes from Whanganui and Taupō were visiting Kapiti Island in 1839.

The reserve was set aside in the original purchase plan of Whanganui town and later used as the York Stockade. This was occupied by officers and men of the 65th Yorkshire Regiment from July 1847. The reserve was named after Captain Cook the famous British Explorer.

In 1896 the Wanganui Amateur Athletic and Cycling Club developed the site into a sports ground, a use which continues to this day. Peter Snell ran his record breaking mile here on January 27 1962, when he broke the then world distance record. A statue commemorating this historic event sits inside the grounds.

www.cooksgardens.org.nz
The Jockey Club

Now a restaurant, the corner building was constructed in 1919 to house the offices of the Wanganui Jockey Club. The club is the oldest Jockey Club in New Zealand and still uses its original race grounds.

At the end of the First World War Whanganui experienced a construction boom with many new commercial buildings constructed within the city centre. The downstairs was constructed to house various offices; the upstairs was the Jockey Club boardroom. The building has been a restaurant since 1986.

[www.beijingrestaurant.co.nz](http://www.beijingrestaurant.co.nz)

King's Chambers

Built in 1919 by dentist Robert Grummitt and designed by local architect Henry Monk Helm, the building was commissioned to house Grummitt’s dental practice and private offices. It is possible the building was named King’s Chambers after the then King George V but it is more likely named to commemorate local man Samuel King as Maria Place is named after his sister Maria. The building remained home to a dental practice until the 1950s.

Perrett’s Building

This three storey building at the corner of Maria Place and Victoria Avenue was completed in 1918 and recalls English-born gold miner and butcher Edwin Perrett who arrived in Whanganui in 1878. This building was built after Perrett died and did not house the butchery.

In 1891 he bought his butchery from H. Hall and at the rear of his shop installed modern equipment including a sausage machine driven by a steam engine and used three carts to serve the townspeople. The meat was carried in bulk and cut in the opened up rear of the cart as housewives requested. The butcher’s shop initially had a sawdust floor, was named the Wanganui Meat Company and managed by one of Perrett’s seven sons.

The National Bank

Purpose built for the National Bank of New Zealand in 1930 by Fletcher Construction, using 40,000 bricks, this elegant building was designed by Cyril Mitchell of Atkins and Mitchell, a Wellington firm of architects which started in Whanganui. The interior banking chamber rises through the full height of the building. The interior space remains largely in original condition.
Cross the road at the pedestrian crossing. Turn right into Victoria Avenue

Williams Jewellers Building

64 Victoria Avenue was built for jewellers J. Williams and Co. Ltd and completed in February 1912 to the designs of Thomas Battle, a noted Whanganui architect. James Williams was a watch maker from Hawke’s Bay who moved to Whanganui in 1903 and established his own jewellery business. The business remained within the Williams family long after James’s death in 1948 before eventually being sold in the 1990s. It remains an active jewellery studio to this day.

Stepping inside is like walking back in time with some of the original black-stained kauri cabinets still in use.

www.jwilliams.co.nz

Look to the opposite side of the road

Collier Building

Built for H. Collier and Co. Ltd – Direct Importers, this building was completed in 1902 and designed by Thomas Harvey James. Brothers Henry and Herbert Collier were importers of sheet music, pianos and organs and supplied most of the lower North Island. They also conducted piano and organ lessons and had a studio built on the top floor to teach from. Note the organ motif on the top parapet of the building. Henry’s daughter Edith Collier became an artist of national repute, posthumously recognised as one of New Zealand’s most significant modernist painters. Many of her works now reside at the Sarjeant Gallery here in Whanganui.

Return back up Victoria Avenue to Majestic Square, next to the National Bank Building

Majestic Square

Named after the magnificent Majestic Theatre which occupied the site from 1912 until demolition in 1979. In the late 1990s the area was turned into a public square.

Note the last remaining fire hydrant at the base of the gas lamp at the front of the square. These hydrants once lined Victoria Avenue and were installed during the time of Whanganui’s first Mayor, William Hogg Watt.

Walk through the square and across the pedestrian crossing on Watt Street

Queen’s Park

The cultural heart of the city is Queen’s Park and includes the Sarjeant Art Gallery building (its collection and displays have been temporarily relocated to Taupō Quay during earthquake strengthening), the Whanganui Regional Museum also relocated for the same purpose to Ridgeway Street, the Wanganui War Memorial Centre, the Davis Library and the Alexander Heritage and Research Library as well as numerous monuments.

The hill has been the site of both Māori and European fortifications. It is known to Māori as Pukenamu (Sandfly Hill) and was the site of a tribal battle in 1832 when the Taranaki tribe Ngāti Te Atiawa attacked the hill manned by Whanganui and Tuwharetoa tribes. By 1846 the 58th Rutlandshire Regiment occupied the hill and built the Rutland Stockade, their occupation continued until 1870. In 1882 the area was taken over by the Council, the stockade was demolished and the area reclaimed for public use.

Self-Guided Tour Ends: Queen’s Park

Visit the venues and attractions here in Queen’s Park to learn...
Whanganui Musicians Club

Located just outside the park, this building was originally built to house the extensive collections of Samuel Drew, founder of the city’s first public museum. Designed by architect Alfred Atkins it was officially opened in 1894 when the collection was in place. In 1898 the building was extended but by the 1920’s was becoming too small to hold the growing collections. The Museum collection was transferred in 1928 to the now Whanganui Regional Museum.

The Whanganui branch of the Savage Club formed in 1891 and moved into the building in 1929 renaming it ‘The Savage Club Hall’. The aims of the club were to provide entertainment, good fellowship and to assist worthy causes. The hall still follows these aims with choir rehearsals, meetings and functions. The Whanganui Musicians Club holds events the first Friday of every month attracting local and national contemporary musicians.

Described by one musician as an ‘atmospheric, vibey-as-hell venue’ with ‘walls and alcoves lined with so much art and history’.

Whanganui Regional Museum

The Whanganui Regional Museum’s buildings in Queen’s Park are currently closed for earthquake strengthening and refurbishment. During the close-down period the Museum continues to offer a number of services and facilities.

The Museum on Ridgway is situated at 62 Ridgway St - formerly the Central Post Office - and is open from 10.00 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Saturday. Featured at this location is the exhibition Te Matapihi - looking into the museum which incorporates many of the most celebrated items from the Museum’s collections in an overview of its 125-year history.

The Museum Archives are still available for private and professional research at the Queen’s Park building from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm Monday to Friday. The Archives include manuscripts, maps, plans, records of institutions, photographs, oral histories and family and personal papers.

www.wrm.org.nz
**Whanganui War Memorial Centre**

One of the finest examples of NZ modernist architecture and a memorial to those who fought in World War II, the building was designed from a plan submitted by NZ architects G. Greenhough, G. Smith and G.C. Newman. Taking two years to build, it opened in 1960 on Anzac Day and was fully funded by the community.

In the lobby are the flags of the NZ Ensign and a replica of the Moutoa flag designed to honour local iwi and show unity between the two races. The beautiful stained glass window on the ground floor was commissioned in 2003 as a tribute to the fallen and is based on Lawrence Binyon's 'Poem for the Fallen'. The permanently lit Book of Remembrance sits on a podium of Swedish granite in front of the glass window.

Available for venue hire, the War Memorial Hall welcomes visitors wanting to view the memorial, displays and unique architecture.

[www.warmemorialcentre.co.nz](http://www.warmemorialcentre.co.nz)

**Alexander Heritage & Research Library**

The Alexander Heritage and Research Library was Whanganui's second library and opened in 1933, funded in most part by the generosity of Miss E. Alexander in memory of her late father, Mr James Alexander. The Art Deco style reflects the trends of the times and was designed by local architects Clifford Newton Hood and John Duffell. After 50 years of service to the community it was considered too small for Whanganui's needs and a new library was built. The new role of the building is to showcase the Library's extensive Heritage Collections of national significance and to provide historical information and research services.

The Alexander Heritage and Research Library is open Monday to Friday from 1:00pm to 5:00pm.

[www.whanganuilibrary.com](http://www.whanganuilibrary.com)

**Tylee Cottage**

Built in 1853, Tylee Cottage is one of Whanganui's oldest homes and is named after Thomas Tylee, a pioneer in charge of the commissariat for the 65th Regiment. Originally located in Wilson Street it was relocated in 1982 to its current site and restored. In 1986 the cottage was re-opened as the Whanganui Artist-in-Residence home with its first resident artist, photographer Laurence Aberhart.

Tylee Cottage now has the longest running Residency scheme in New Zealand. Other residents have included Sue Cooke, Anne Noble, Peter Ireland and Julian Hooper, a descendant of Anglican missionary Reverend Richard Taylor.
Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehua Whanganui

When Henry Sarjeant died in 1912 he bequeathed the residue of his estate to the city with the expressed wish that they establish and maintain a fine arts gallery for Whanganui ‘as a means of inspiration for ourselves and those who come after us’.

Currently closed at this location for earthquake strengthening, a re-development plan is underway and collections are housed at a temporary location at 38 Taupō Quay opposite the i-SITE. The original building is designed in the form of a Greek cross with a central sculpture hall under a dome. Constructed with Oamaru stone, windows and walls were designed to reduce the amount of direct and reflected light which could detract from viewing the art works.

The building is iconic in Whanganui, positioned as it is at the top of the Veterans’ Steps.  
[www.sarjeant.org.nz](http://www.sarjeant.org.nz)

The Cenotaph

The Cenotaph is a memorial to the men and women of Whanganui who died in the First World War and is the location of the annual Anzac Day Dawn Parade Service in the city. Constructed from reinforced concrete and Coromandel granite, the cross on each face represents the sacrifice made by the fallen while the lamp is the symbol of eternal life.

Band Rooms

In 1901 it became necessary to construct new band rooms to accommodate the Wanganui Garrison Band which was made up of two bands – the Wanganui Rifles Band and the Wanganui Rifle Volunteer Band. A new building was shifted to the present site until it was destroyed by fire in 1996. The current rooms were built with acoustical quality a high priority and its architectural style uses elements from other Queen's Park buildings.  
[www.brasswanganui.com](http://www.brasswanganui.com)
Queen’s Park Boulder & Rutland Stockade

Situated at the upper lookout car park, the Boulder acknowledges the Rutland Stockade that once stood on the site. Tension between Māori and European settlers led the establishment of the military post and the stockade was completed in 1847 and the 58th Regiment moved in to garrison it. Other British Regiments stationed there included the 65th, 57th and the 18th Royal Irish. Sixty yards by sixty-two, enclosing two blockhouses it is believed this was the largest stockade ever to be built in New Zealand. In later years the Rutland Stockade was used as a prison until the structure began to deteriorate and in 1887 it was sold for demolition.

Excavation in 2002 discovered the remains of the wall and two fences of the stockade. Bricks possibly from a storeroom or similar structure were decided to be used to mark the two fence lines with the inner line of bricks showing the position of the stockade fence. The outer line of bricks marks the line of the later prison fence. Remains of the fences are still underground.

Te Taurawhiri Tōtara

The carved pou (pole), Te Taurawhiri, once graced the courtyard of the Davis Library, was carved inside the library and gifted by Whanganui iwi to the city in 1984.

Figures on the pou represented the three ancestral guardians of the Whanganui River. Hinengākau, the guardian of the upper reaches of the river, Tamaupoko, the guardian of the middle reaches and Tupoho, guardian of the lower reaches to the sea. It was named for the ‘taurawhiri (plaited rope) of Hinengākau’ that is representative of the ties of Whanganui iwi to the Whanganui River and its tributaries.

When showing signs of deterioration in the 1990’s it was taken down and returned to the earth in 1999. The tōtara tree standing today was planted to ensure the resting place of Te Taurawhiri was not forgotten. After the passing of the pou it became the inspiration for the Te Taurawhiri Māori collection in the library today.

The Carillion

Given in Dutch custom to mark an auspicious occasion, the bells of the Carillon were cast in Holland and gifted to mark the bond between the Netherlands and Whanganui and celebrate the opening of Farm Equipment Company’s new factory. The factory was the first owned by Dutch company P.J. Zwiggers en Zonen outside Europe.

Comprised of 18 various sized bells, they can be played manually on the two octave keyboard housed in the plinth or controlled by an electronic pulse. The Carillon plays at least once each hour and has a range of pre-set tunes.

Veterans’ Steps

Planning and layout for Queen’s Park took place in 1919 and the Borough Council requested an ornate flight of concrete steps to be built as the main approach from Maria Place to the then new Sarjeant Gallery. Plans provided for the removal of the Lion Monument from its position at the top of the hill to a lower, central site on the steps.

Major restoration work took place in 2006 and included the careful cleaning of the monument under the guidance of a professional conservator. The steps were re-dedicated in a special ceremony held on Remembrance Day. It is not unusual to see wedding photography take place here today.
Lion Monument

Designed and sculpted by Whanganui artist, George Sherriff, the Lion Monument is the memorial to the members of the Imperial and Volunteer Forces who gave their lives in defence of the Whanganui settlement and was erected in 1892 (dedicated in 1893). It is made from Waikawa bluestone and marble and was the first example in New Zealand of a sculptured lion.

Beneath the paving where the monument is situated, lie the remains of 17 men of the 18th and 50th Regiments killed at the Battle of Nukumaru in January 1865.

Queen’s Park School Memorial Gates

Funds were raised in 1926 by school pupils for these Memorial Gates in honour of past pupils who gave their lives in the First World War. The gates were retained when the school was demolished in 1977 and the library building is situated on the old site.

St Andrew's Hall

Now home to the Wanganui Highland Pipe Band, St Andrews Hall is adjacent to the Police Station. In 1942 the Band wanted its own hall but wartime restrictions meant that building permits were not available for any non-essential projects. Offered a space in the now Whanganui War Memorial Centre, this did not go ahead and the City Council offered a site in Bell Street at a peppercorn rental which also was not accepted. The Band resumed earlier fundraising and opened its own hall in 1959.
Contact

Contact Information in order of appearance.

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M.V. Wairua – Mr Hatrick’s Motor Vessel
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If you're a vintage enthusiast or just yearn for yesteryear you must come to the Vintage Weekend, Whanganui’s premiere heritage event. Ideal for motorists, music lovers, foodies and families.