

Coronation Memorial

The Square, Palmerston North

NZHPT Registration Number: 1258
NZHPT Registration Type: Historic Place – Category II
NZHPT Registration Date: 02/07/82
City/District Council: Palmerston North City Council
District Plan Status: Category 1



Brief History

Designed in the Gothic style by Napier-based architect Charles A Vautier, the fountain was constructed in 1902, and commemorates the coronation of King Edward VII in 1902, the 25th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Borough of Palmerston North on August 9th of the same year, and also the Proclamation of Palmerston North as a city in 1930.

The structure is constructed of Timaru bluestone and Oamaru stone, and was carved by Palmerston North stonemasons Samuel Dowdall and his son James Thomas Dowdall. The fountain resembles a small Gothic spire with its buttress-like base corners, trefoil relief, and crocket ornamentation. The spire is topped with an ornamental crown. Originally, four octagonal rows of steps led up to the fountain, a drinking cup was attached with a chain to each of the four corners of the structure, and two higher water sprays accompanied the four spouting bronze lion heads. Included in the inscriptions on the four faces of the monument are the names of the Borough Council members of 1902, and of the mayors of Palmerston North from 1877 to 1902.

Originally located in the centre of the square, the fountain was relocated in 1926 to make way for the new War Memorial. The fountain was positioned in the centre of the fishpond in the South-West quadrant of the Square, which was constructed in 1905 by the Beautification Society. The pond was filled in with soil to create a flowerbed in the 1980s. The memorial was moved again in 2006 to the Ladies' Rest part of the Square as part of the Square rejuvenation project. Restoration work over 2005/2006 included stripping of paint to reveal the stone, replacement of lost decorative features by stonemason Mark Whyte, replacement of the octagonal steps according to the original plan, and restoration of the fountain's inner pipes and chambers. This monument has strong historical and patriotic significance.

Principal Sources:

Bowman, I & Kelly, M, *Palmerston North CBD Heritage Inventory*. Palmerston North, Palmerston North City Council, 2003.

Palmerston North City Heritage Trail. Palmerston North City Council, 1993.

Manawatu Branch Historic Places Trust Record 010023.

Palmerston North City Library Photograph Collection Sq33, 41-43, 56, 228, 243, 369; Mo 8; Pond without fountain, Sq 93, 123.