

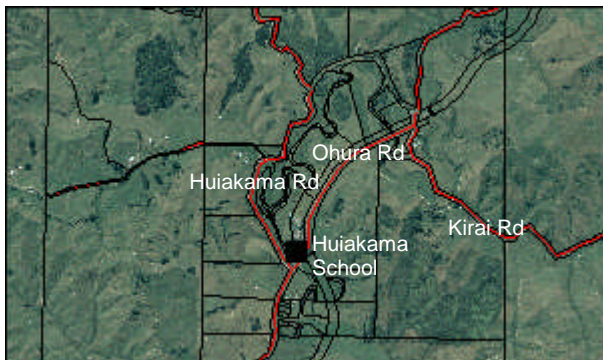


Huiakama School

Ohura Rd, Huiakama

1896

Use:	School	Historic Value:	2 out of 5
Materials:	Weatherboards	Architectural Value:	1 out of 4
NZHPT Registered:	Not registered	Technical Value:	- out of 2
Legal Description:	Sec 72 Blk X Ngatimaru SD	Symbolic Value:	- out of 3



Rarity Value:	- out of 2
Townscape Value:	1 out of 2
Group Value:	- out of 2
Overall Heritage Value:	4 out of 20

In September 1895 the Taranaki Education Board decided that a new school was needed in the Mangaere or Strathmore District, as there was a large number of pupils having to travel long distances to get to the closest school . After talking with Mrs. Mackay and Mrs. Allsworth, a school site in Mangaere was approved on, as Mangaere could offer 23 pupils, and Strathmore could only offer 2. As one quick wit in the community said, this town “*would rival Strathmore and become Strathmost*”.

The school site was cleared after a bridge was made by felling a large Rimu tree across the river and nailing split timber crossways on it. (Using this method, bullocks could be taken singly across it, and the site was more accessible). Mangaere School was built by the Boon Bros, after a tender of 228 pounds from Messrs Elliot and King was accepted. Grass seed was supplied for the school paddock in early 1896.

The school was opened in April 1896, with a tea, concert and dance lasting until daybreak being held to celebrate the occasion. Mangaere became the first school to be opened in the Whangamomona County, and the 56th school to open in Taranaki. The school opened with a roll number of 18, coming from 10 different families, and Mr. R.W. Hill was appointed temporary teacher. After three months, Miss Irvine took up the position, which she held until 1898, when Mr. Isaac West was appointed.

At this time, the school and district were known as Mangaere. However, in 1900 the school name changed to Huiakama (which means “joyful gathering”), because of the suburb in Auckland, Mangare, which sounded very similar. The Inspector also visited during this year, and the report shows that 43 pupils were enrolled, with 33 being present at the Inspector’s visit, and 25 passing the examination. In October, Mr. P. Finlayson succeeded Mr. West.



The new Huiakama School

In 1902, the school applied for enlargement of the building but was met with the response “no funds”. However, the committee persevered, and in 1903 a tender of 130 pounds by Boon Bros was accepted. The committee also persevered with the teacher’s residence, which was built in 1905 after 6 years of asking.

On the 5th of November 1947, the new school was opened by W.J. Poison, MP. The old school was then purchased from the Board by the school committee, as they needed a social centre for the community. (As well as being a utility room for the new school).

Apparently, the school had numerous animal skeletons which sat on the mantelpieces above the fireplaces. These disappeared in 1952, when electricity arrived and the building was relined and set up as a multi purpose room. It was then used as a Church and Sunday School by the Roman Catholics, and later by the Presbyterians. Women’s Division also used it for parties and social functions, and it was later used as the film room and lunch room for the new school.

Bibliography

Huiakama School and District 1896-1996 Centennial Celebrations
Church, Ian; *The Stratford Inheritance*, The Heritage Press (1990) p77