



Ngaere Roll of Honour – WW II

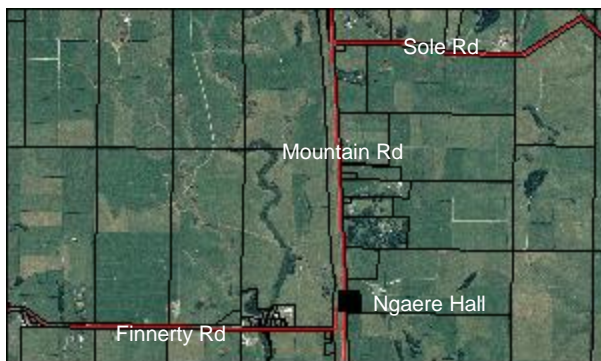
Ngaere Hall

Mountain Rd, Ngaere

1886

Use: Public hall
Materials: Timber, iron roofing
NZHPT Registered: Not registered
Legal Description: -

Historic Value: 3 out of 5
Architectural Value: 1 out of 4
Technical Value: - out of 2
Symbolic Value: 2 out of 3
Rarity Value: - out of 2
Townscape Value: 1 out of 2
Group Value: - out of 2
Overall Heritage Value: 7 out of 20



Ngaere District was settled in the late 1870s, and it was not long after this that Mr. James Robson donated part of the farm, near where his sawmill was, as land for a public hall. It is believed that Robson also supplied the timber, Mr. Henry Score Sanders built the hall, and the total costs were around £150. The hall was finished late 1886, with a Plain and Fancy Ball being held on the 4th of February 1887 to celebrate the opening.

A Hall Committee was formed out of local settlers, who often had to make personal donations to try and keep up the hall payments. This problem continued, with Committee members always having to appeal for funds. This shortage of funds is seen in 1891, when a man was granted use of the Hall, providing he built a brick 'dunny' for it. He complied, but was told in the next year to pull it down and build a decent one.

By 1914 the Ngaere Public Hall Society was registered as property of the public.

At the time of the Hall being opened, it was suggested that a library be put in place. However, it was not until 1900 that the library committee was given permission to build a room with dimensions 20ft x 12ft onto the back of the Hall. The library was successful, remaining in operation until around 1946, by which time there were at least two and a half thousand books on the shelves. Many locals have fond memories of this library.

Many restorations have been made to the Hall by the local community. In 1908 the Hall was lined - financed by a bazaar that the local ladies had held the previous year. Sometime in early 1937 a front porch and supper room were added along the north side of the Hall, and an oil burner and beaver-board lining for the kitchen were purchased. The Hall roof was meant to have been painted green in 1939, but the shortage of quality paint halted this plan. During September 1946 a working bee was held to remove the library, do alterations and repairs, and have a general clean-up. Earlier in this year the stage had been enlarged, in preparation for the grand ball on May 30, marking the first 60 years of Ngaere Hall.

Other, larger alterations include the re-flooring of the Hall in 1954 and a new roof and chimney being added to the back room in 1963.

Many events were held at the Ngaere Hall. During the 1960s, card evenings were popular, with players – especially in the winter months – bringing along their own firewood. In the 1920s, and again in the 1970s when it was revived, Old Time Dances were held, with Hall Committee families meeting in the afternoons to prepare the supper.

After World War II, a Roll of Honour was erected in the Hall. This board contains the names of 49 Ngaere men who risked their lives for the sake of their country, and serves as a constant reminder of them and their families. (Ngaere also had a World War I Roll of Honour, unveiled in 1921. Unfortunately, this had been placed in the school, which burnt down in October 1928, and it was not replaced).

The history of Ngaere Hall is full of accounts of the large number of local people who served on the Hall Committee and looked after the hall. This is why the Ngaere Hall is still standing, and can in fact be seen as a building which helps form the core of the Ngaere locality today, the Roll of Honour adding to the memories which the Hall contains.