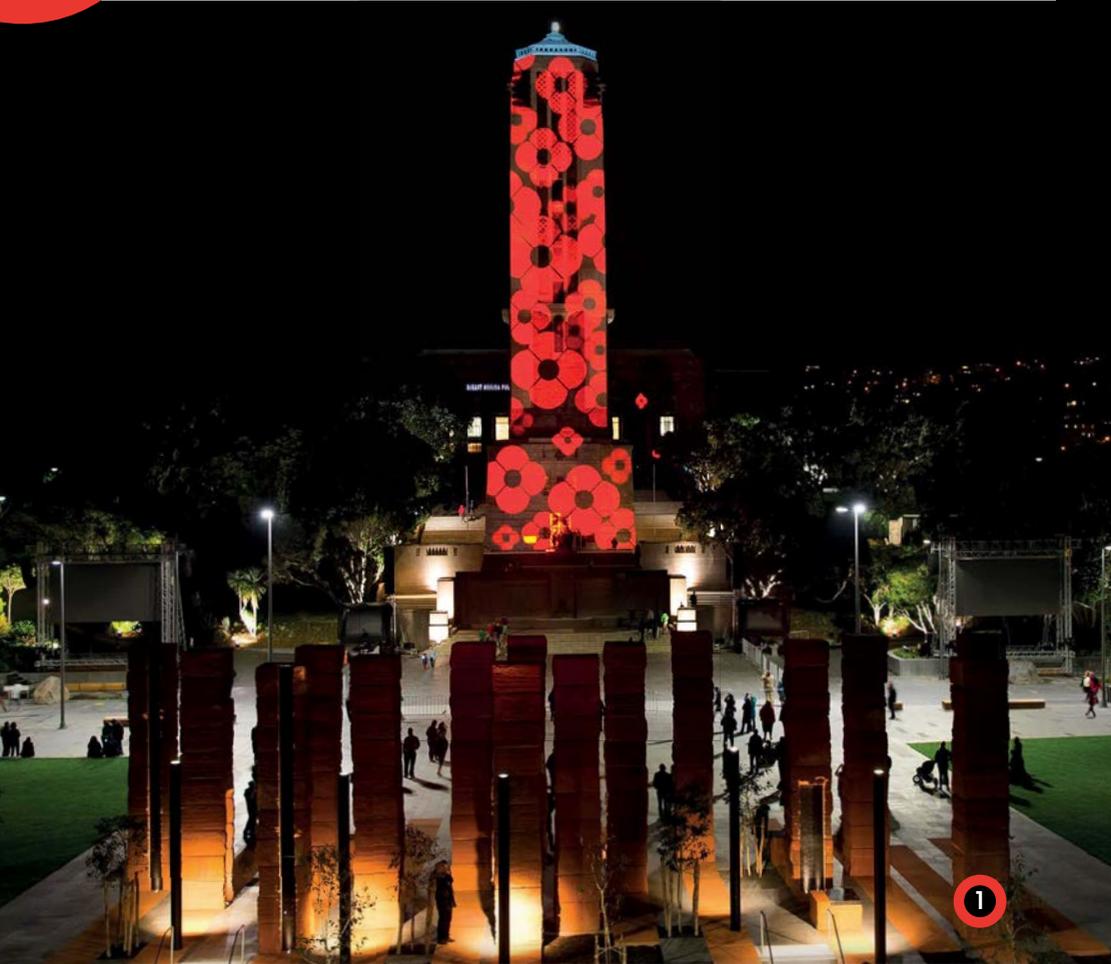


IN MEMORY

First World War Memorials | by Jock Phillips



Every year, Anzac Day ceremonies are held throughout New Zealand. Have you been to one? If you have, it's likely that you've seen a war memorial.

● Look inside the back cover for more information about the photos in this article.

What is a war memorial?

A war memorial is a **monument** to remember those who died in a war. It will often list their names. There are more than five hundred war memorials in New Zealand. Many of these were built after the First World War.

Why were war memorials built after the First World War?

The sorrow of relatives and friends

This is the most important reason why the memorials were built. More than eighteen thousand soldiers from New Zealand died in the First World War. Sixteen New Zealand nurses also died. Those soldiers and nurses all had people who were close to them – mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, wives, girlfriends, boyfriends, children, and good friends. Nearly all the dead soldiers and nurses were buried overseas. People wanted a place close to home where they could go to remember their loved ones.

The pride of the community

Most New Zealanders were proud of the people who served in the First World War. They wanted to show that those soldiers and nurses were honoured and respected.

An example for future generations

Some people believed that a monument to those who had “died for their country” might encourage young New Zealanders to serve their country in the future.

A focus for Anzac Day services

Anzac Day was introduced as a day to remember the men and women who had taken part in the First World War. A memorial provided a place where an Anzac Day service could be held and **wreaths** could be laid. They were often built in a park or the central square of a town.

Who paid for the memorials?

The money for **local** memorials was raised by local communities. (The government didn't pay for local memorials.) Much of the money was raised by the same women who had raised money to help soldiers during the war.



2

Types of memorials



3

Obelisks

Stone **obelisks** were often used in cemeteries, so they were a familiar and popular choice for memorials. Their stone faces allowed for **inscriptions** and lists of names. Obelisks are the most common type of memorial in New Zealand.

Soldier figures

Almost fifty communities put up statues of soldiers as their memorials. Some statues look as if the soldier is ready to fight. Other soldiers are standing to attention with their rifles pointing to the ground as if they are at the funeral of a friend.



4



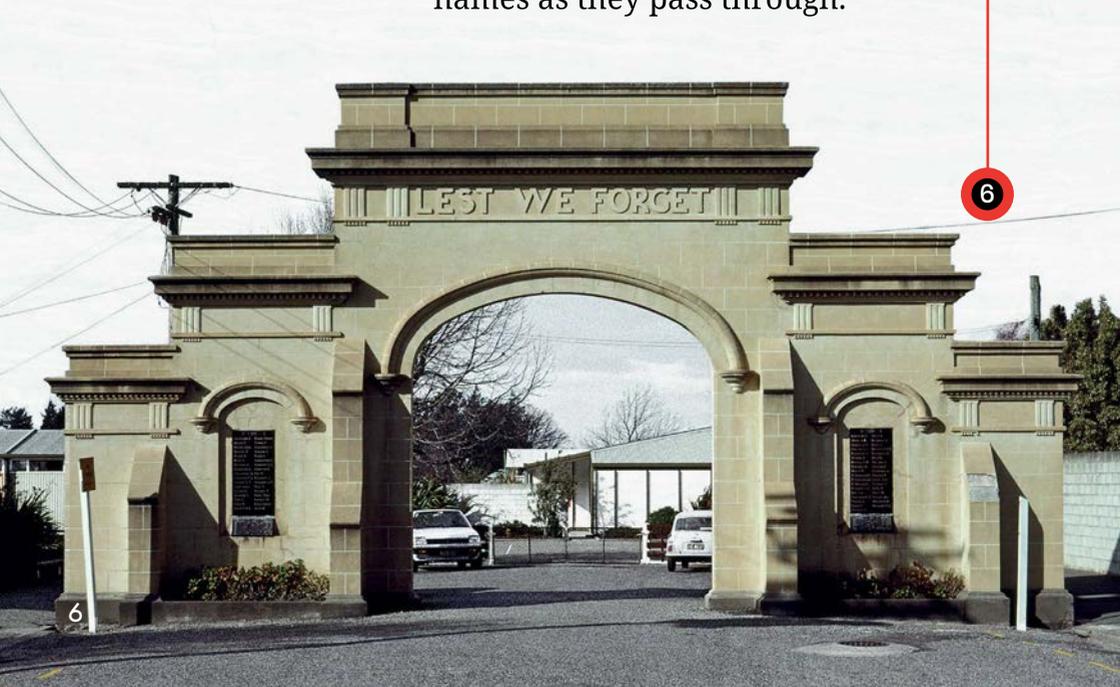
5

Female figures

About fifteen war memorials are statues of female figures. Some are angels of death; some are of the ancient Greek goddess of victory. In Palmerston North, there is a statue of a mother looking towards the battlefields where her sons died.

Arches and gates

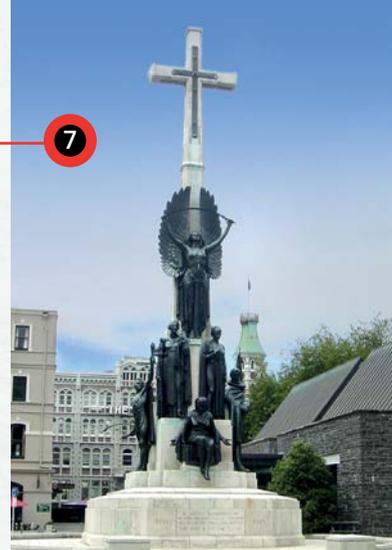
There are about thirty memorial arches and fifty memorial gates in New Zealand. Many of these gates are at schools. People can read the inscriptions and examine the list of names as they pass through.



6

Crosses

In the United Kingdom, the most common war memorial was a cross, but there are only a few of these in New Zealand. Perhaps this is because communities wanted to remember all the people who had served and died in the war, and these included some who were not Christian.



7

Stained-glass windows

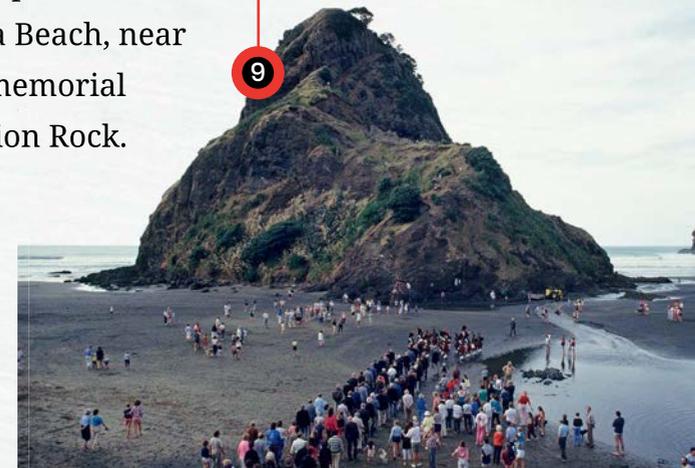
Most of these windows are in schools or churches.



8

Natural features

Among the most unusual war memorials are those that use natural features. At Cave in South Canterbury, the memorial is a large boulder with an inscription carved into the stone. At Piha Beach, near Auckland, there is a memorial plaque on the huge Lion Rock.



9

The national memorial

After the First World War, there were many ideas for a **national** war memorial to remember the men and women who had died. Some people wanted a memorial road; others wanted a memorial cathedral. After a lot of debate, it was decided that the memorial would be a **carillon**. The bells were to be played on the anniversary of battles so that listeners would remember those who died. The carillon was opened on Anzac Day 1932. Today, it is part of the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, which honours everyone who served in all of New Zealand's overseas wars.

Glossary

carillon: a set of bells, usually in a tower

inscription: words written or carved
onto something

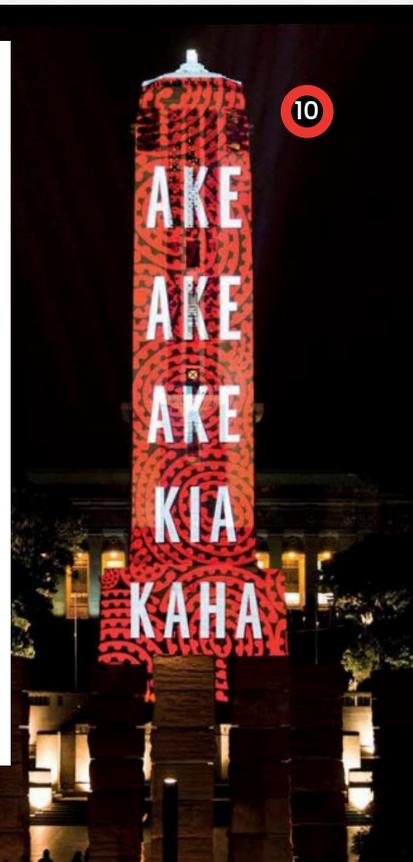
local: to do with a community or a
particular area

monument: a statue or other structure built
to remember someone or something

national: to do with the whole country

obelisk: a stone pillar that gets narrower
towards the top

wreath: flowers and leaves arranged
in a circle



In Memory: First World War Memorials

by Jock Phillips

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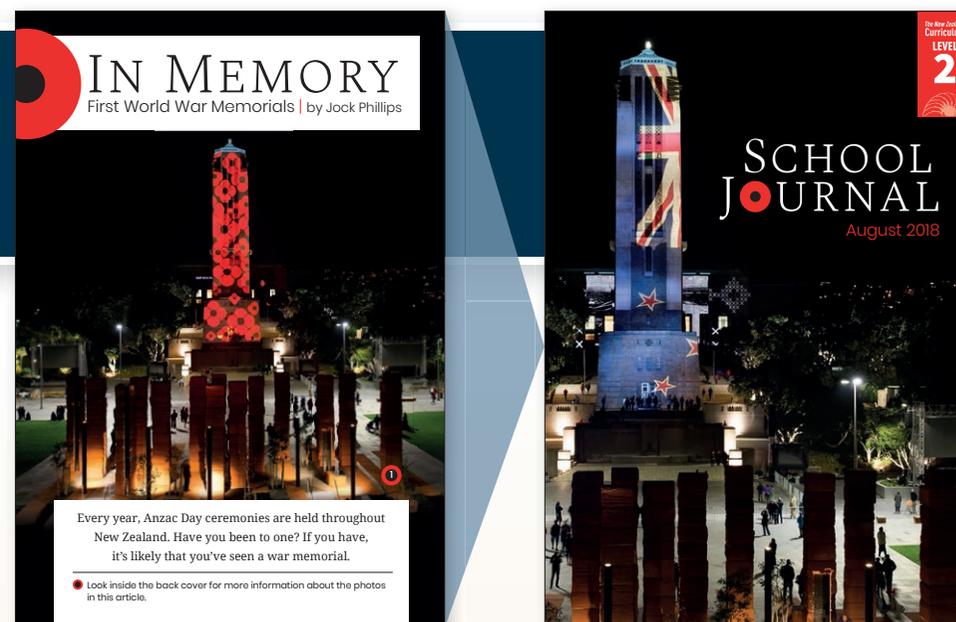
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