

**TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** Timaru Troopers' Memorial  
**ADDRESS** Reserve bounded by King and Catherine Streets & Memorial Avenue, Timaru

**PHOTOGRAPH**



(HNZPT)

**FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO.** NO. 18      **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** 2046 / 2  
(at time of assessment)

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** Legal Road

**VALUATION NUMBER** n/a

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1904

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** Samuel McBride, designer/contractor

**STYLE** Figurative classical memorial

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Statue of a soldier in uniform is mounted on a stepped plinth with inset columns at each corner. Panels mounted on each side; one bears the memorial inscription, the other three bear the rank, name and unit of each soldier memorialised.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Bluestone, concrete, Aberdeen granite, Carrara marble.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Relocated to current site, lower steps either removed or buried (1926). Trooper's rifle replaced (c.2000 and after 2010).

**SETTING**

The memorial is set within a grassed reserve bounded by King Street, Memorial Avenue and Catherine Street. To the south along Memorial Avenue is the South Canterbury War Memorial (heritage item # 17). The memorial faces north and is set against a backdrop of two trees and a picnic table with shelter wall. The setting is the triangular parcel on which the memorial is sited, consistent with the HNZPT extent of listing.

## **HISTORY**

Designs for the 'Deceased Troopers' Memorial, to commemorate the local soldiers who died during the South African (Boer) War of 1899-1902 were invited by Hanson Mee in March 1903. The Troopers' Memorial was originally erected in December 1904 across the road from the army drill hall at the corner of High and Mill Streets. Petitions either in support of that site or in opposition to it had been presented to the Troopers' Memorial Committee in August 1904, but as the foundations and steps had already been installed by that date it seems unlikely the decision was ever going to be to choose another site. The statue was manufactured in Carrara, Italy and the granite for the base was shipped from Aberdeen, Scotland. Local monumental mason Samuel McBride undertook the foundation works and assembled the memorial, which was complete by late 1904 but not unveiled until 23 February 1905. In 1926 the memorial was relocated to its present site.

## **HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Timaru Troopers' Memorial has historic and social significance for its association with New Zealand's involvement in the South African War. It is directly connected to the people, their families and descendants, whose names are inscribed upon the memorial. Up until and during World War I troopers' memorials were the site of memorial services around the country, including at Timaru.

## **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Timaru Troopers' Memorial has cultural significance as a place of community identity and historic continuity. The memorial has commemorative significance and also memorialises men who served in the South African War and later died during WWI.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The Timaru Troopers' Memorial has aesthetic significance as an ornamental figurative memorial, designed by local stonemason Samuel McBride using imported and local component pieces. Nine South African War memorials featuring the figure of the trooper were erected in New Zealand in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, including those at Oamaru and Dunedin.

## **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

The Timaru Troopers' Memorial has craftsmanship significance for the quality of its construction and detailing. It was quite common to order a 'readymade' marble statue from Italy after the South African War and World War I. Sometimes photographs of local soldiers were supplied to guide the sculptor.

## **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Timaru Troopers' Memorial has contextual significance as a local landmark set within its own grassed reserve. The scheduled South Canterbury War Memorial is at the southern end of Memorial Avenue (heritage item # 17) and the ash trees planted the length of the avenue are listed as notable trees.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

As the memorial post-dates 1900, any potential archaeological significance of the site would likely relate to its earlier use and development. It appears the site has always been designated as a legal road.

## **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The Timaru Troopers' Memorial has overall heritage significance to Timaru and the district of Timaru as a whole. The memorial has historical and social significance for its association with

local involvement in the South African War and cultural significance given its commemorative purpose. The Timaru Troopers' Memorial has aesthetic significance for its design by local stonemason Samuel McBride and craftsmanship significance for the quality of its construction and detailing. The Timaru Troopers' Memorial has contextual significance as a local landmark and in relation to the South Canterbury War Memorial.

## HERITAGE CATEGORY

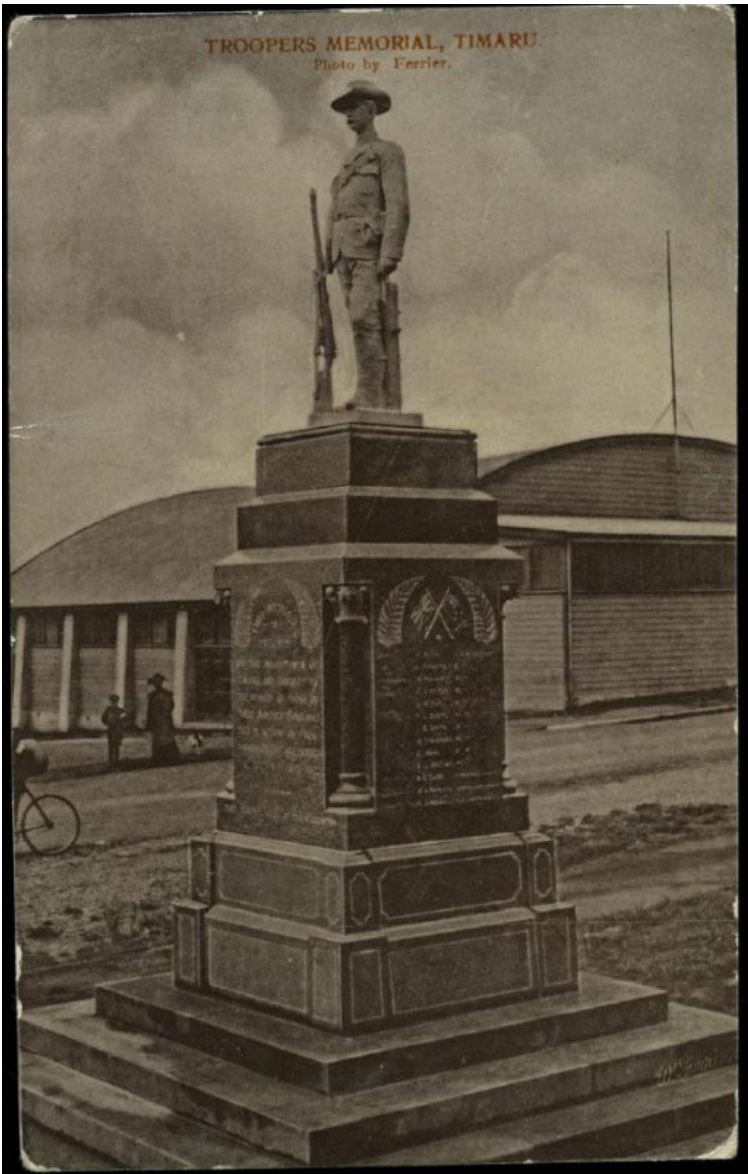
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## REFERENCES

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- *Grey River Argus* 26 January 1914, p. 3.
- *Evening Post* 28 June 1926, p. 3.
- *Press* 15 September 1925, p. 4.
- *Ashburton Guardian* 20 May 1903, p. 2.
- *Otago Daily Times* 30 August 1904, p. 5; 18 August 1926, p. 14.
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- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/2046>
- JM Morgan 'Sites of Memory - Memorialisation in the Landscape' MSc thesis, University of Canterbury, Christchurch 2001; available online.
- C Maclean & J Phillips *The Sorrow and the Pride – New Zealand War Memorials* Wellington, 1990.



Extent of setting, plot bounded by King Street, Memorial Avenue & Catherine Street, Timaru.



Memorial on its original site. South Canterbury Museum collection.