

St Patrick's Church 150th Jubilee

On Anzac weekend 2021, St Patrick's Church, Waipawa, will host celebrations to commemorate 150 years since the first church was dedicated.

St Patrick's has been a focal point for many families in its long history, and the parish is inviting those families and their descendants, as well as past pupils, teachers, and Religious of St Columba's School, back for this special celebration.

There have been three churches on the site over the 150 years. Father Reignier, who from 1851-1871 periodically trekked from his Meanee Mission station to minister to settlers and Maori in the Waipawa District, instigated the building of the first church, which was dedicated by Bishop Viard on 16th April 1871.

A growing congregation led to a larger church being built around 1890, with the original church being moved to the back of the property, and used as a schoolroom. This second church was destroyed by fire during the night of 30th March 1920. People of all denominations throughout the district rallied to raise funds to build the present church, designed to look like St Mary of the Angels Church in Wellington, and which was opened debt free in 1921.

This, the current St Patrick's Church, withstood the 1931 Earthquake, and stands today as a testimony to the faith of those earlier hardworking generations

Friday evening 23rd April will be the first chance for many to reunite, with a 'meet and greet', and a "book launch", planned at the historic Waipawa Municipal Theatre.

Saturday's itinerary includes morning tea and a cemetery tour, and dinner. A special Mass will be celebrated at St Patrick's at 4.30pm, by Cardinal John Dew and co-celebrated by Father Paul; and other visiting priests .

The organisers of this milestone event are gathering history, information and stories for an anniversary book, and wish to contact as many interested families and individuals as possible.

To enquire about this historic event, please contact Sue Cullen, phone [06] 8578681, email dalreoch.wi@xtra.co.nz

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