

St George's Anglican Church, Gate Pā, Tauranga

The Battles of Gate Pā and Te Ranga

In 1864 at the end of the Waikato War, Tauranga Moana iwi and the British Army with the Royal Navy faced off in two significant battles; Gate Pā and Te Ranga. The British were decisively defeated at Gate Pā but the tables were turned at Te Ranga where approximately 160 Māori were killed. The aftermath of the battle saw large confiscations of Māori land and the establishment of the fledgling town of Tauranga. These events reverberate down through time and still have an effect on the life of the city today.

St. Georges Anglican Church sits on the site of the Battle of Gate Pā. Because we are on this site, we have a sense of responsibility for holding the story of both the battles and the aftermath with integrity, and to tell it to people of all age groups. The story lives on into the present. The church and the battle-site are a venue for ceremonies and commemorations, public lectures and educational trips. The place is visited by tourists and members of the public who wish to learn more about New Zealand's history. We continue to care for this site and keep the story alive through various public events and hosting groups, including school groups.

Our story:

The first Anglican Church in Gate Pā was built in 1900, and was a daughter church of Holy Trinity Tauranga for many years. We became an independent parish when our first vicar, Reverend C.D.R. Stevens, was inducted in 1962.

In 1992 the church experienced a significant fire, which resulted in our current building being erected in 1993.

Today we are a parish made up of mainly Pākehā New Zealanders with some Māori whānau and other ethnicities. We are journeying together to explore what it means to be a Tikanga Pākehā parish on a sacred Māori site.

We are seeking to use more te reo Māori in our services and to have more connection with our Tikanga Māori partners.

More information can be found in the History of St. Georges booklet. This is available for purchase at the church. We also sell "Victory at Gate Pa?" by Buddy Mikaere and Cliff Simons.

Honouring the 150th commemorations

2014 saw huge gatherings commemorate the 150th anniversary of the battles of Gate Pā and Te Ranga. There were a number of diverse events held, including significant events on the days and the very successful Battle exhibition. It is our hope that these will not be one off events, but the beginning of the people of this city engaging in the growing interest, local and nationwide, in our colonial past and how it shaped present day New Zealand society.

What We Offer

A significant part of our ministry here is hosting various groups from around Tauranga Moana and further afield who wish to hear about the battle and its aftermath.

Above the doors to the church is written "All who enter here be reconciled". By telling the story of the

battles, and of Henare Wiremu Taratoa's compassionate battle code and the actions of Heni Te Kiri Karamu and others we seek to offer a basis for Maori and Pakeha and people of all races to build mutual trust and respect and work together for the benefit of our city.

We offer talks to any interested group. These are tailored for people of all ages, from school to adult groups. These talks been partly prepared by Cliff Simons, a local military historian, who recently co-authored "Victory at Gate Pa" with Buddy Mikaere, written to help people understand why the fighting broke out at Gate Pā, what happened during and after the battle.

They are mostly given by John Heberton, the vicar. Each presentation uses images screened in PowerPoint to make the talks more engaging.

If there is time and the weather is kind there will also be an opportunity to look around the site to try to imagine what it looked like in 1864.

There is no charge for these visits. We want to make these as available as possible. We are open to receiving a koha.

If you would like to organise then please contact either John or the Parish Office.



Our people:

Rev John Hebenton
Vicar



Patricia Price
Parish Administrator

Where is St. George's?

1 Church Street
Gate Pā, Tauranga, 3112.

The Church and Office are open from
9am to 12 noon every week day

Office phone: 07 578 7916
email: stgeorges.gatepa@xtra.co.nz
web:
<https://www.stgeorgesgatepa.com>

Vicar's phone: 021 679 202
email:
John.Hebentontssf@gmail.com



School and Group Visits

To learn about the battles of
Gate Pā and Te Ranga



*St. George's
Anglican Church
Gate Pā, Tauranga.*