

LEISURE

Of passing interest

Historic features in our landscape observed by the Director of Puke Ariki **Kelvin Day.**

Holy Trinity Church, Fitzroy

On Henui Street, Fitzroy, sits one of New Plymouth's earliest buildings. Te Henui Church, now known as Holy Trinity, was opened in early 1845 and was the first established Anglican church in Taranaki. Organised Pakeha settlement of New Plymouth began in 1841 and in October 1842 Bishop George Augustus Selwyn visited the settlement. He set about organising the building of the Te Henui Church, along with Te Henui Vicarage and St. Mary's Church. At that time Te Henui was some distance from the fledgling settlement of New Plymouth. Building got under way on the church,



designed by architect Frederick Thatcher under the watchful eye of the Reverend William Bolland, using funds supplied by Bishop Selwyn. The building was originally considered a temporary structure but after the Taranaki Wars moves were made to make the church more permanent. In 1872 the

original wall cladding was replaced with board and battens and the thatched roof was replaced with shingles. In 1888 the building was divided in two to accommodate transepts. Subsequently three further building projects have expanded the building into a modestly sized timber church. While Thatcher was

responsible for the initial design, New Plymouth architects James Sanderson and Francis John (Frank) Messenger deserve much credit for their creative input which resulted in the current structure. The Gothic Revival inspired features of the building reference other ecclesiastical buildings that

Selwyn and Thatcher created together. The Holy Trinity church is one of the more important buildings in New Plymouth, not only as an important piece of church architecture but also as a rare survivor of the Taranaki Wars period which saw a large number of pre-1860 buildings destroyed.