The stories of New Zealand Aotearoa weave together places and events to create a rich tapestry of our history. Northland is home to many sites that helped shape the nation we are today. Discover, experience and enjoy these stories by visiting our Landmarks Whenua Tohunga.

Whether you’re a New Zealander or a visitor, you can gain a deeper understanding of who we were and who we are today.

We invite you to explore as many sites as you can.

LANDMARKS WHENUA TOHUNGA

Discover the places that have shaped our nation and created our stories. History comes to life at these nine significant Northland Landmarks.

To plan your trip and learn more about the fascinating history you'll see along the way, visit www.landmarks.nz

1 Ruapekapeka Pā
2 Pompallier Mission and Printery
3 Cape Brett / Rākaumangamanga
4 Waitangi Treaty Grounds
5 Māngungu Mission
6 Rangihoua Heritage Park
7 Te Waimate Mission
8 Kororipo Heritage Park
9 Clendon House
1 RUAPEKAPEKA PĀ
THE FINAL BATTLE
Explore Ruapekapeka Pā, the site of the final battle of the New Zealand Wars in the North. The conflict was fought between British colonial forces and northern Māori in 1845-1846 over different interpretations of the Treaty of Waitangi. The innovative design of the pā was very effective as a defence against British muskets and heavy artillery. You can still see the ditch and bank defences, a cannon used by Chief Kawiti and the earthen defences of the British.

Photo Credit: Steve Burgess

2 POMPALLIER MISSION AND PRINTERY
THE POWER OF PRINT
Pompallier Mission is New Zealand’s oldest industrial building and only surviving pioneer printery and tannery. Situated on the waterfront in the Bay of Islands, the mission and printery is a rare survivor of the traditional French rammed-earth style of architecture. Bishop Pompallier understood the power of the printed word, and his Marist missionaries printed thousands of books.

Photo Credit: Steve Burgess

3 CAPE BRETT / RĀKAUMANGAMANGA
GUIDING LIGHT
The light reflecting off the crystalline rocks once helped guide the earliest waka to a safe landfall in this new homeland. For the past 100 years the Cape Brett lighthouse has lit and protected the coast for all seafarers, and continues to do so today. Only one lighthouse keeper's cottage remains at Cape Brett – Rākaumangamanga – a solitary reminder of the challenges of being a lighthouse keeper in this remote place.

Photo Credit: Nick Thompson, Flickr.com (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

4 WAITANGI TREATY GROUNDS
OUR NATION’S BIRTHPLACE
Stand at the very spot where the Treaty of Waitangi, our founding document, was signed by Māori chiefs and the British Crown on 6 February 1840. Explore Te Whare Rūnanga (the House of Assembly) and the waka house containing the world’s largest war canoe. The new state-of-the-art Museum of Waitangi, where past and present meet, tells the story of this special place through multi-media displays and significant taonga (treasures) associated with Waitangi.

5 MĀNGUNGU MISSION
THE LARGEST TREATY OF WAITANGI SIGNING
On the shores of the Hokianga Harbour, Māngungu was established as a Wesleyan mission station in 1828 under the invitation and protection of the Māori leader Patuone. The simple mission building was constructed in 1839 for the Reverend Nathaniel Turner. On 12 February 1840 it became the scene of the largest Treaty of Waitangi signing, with more than 70 chiefs gathering at Māngungu to add their signatures before a crowd of 3,000 people.

Photo Credit: Steve Burgess

6 RANGIHOUA HERITAGE PARK
OUR FIRST CHRISTMAS STORY
Marsden Cross
At Rangihoua Heritage Park you can explore New Zealand’s first planned European settlement, a place where Māori and Europeans lived side by side through an agreement between Chief Ruatara and Reverend Samuel Marsden. The Marsden Cross memorial marks the place where New Zealand’s very first Christmas Day service was held, led by Reverend Marsden in 1814.

Photo Credit: Nick Thompson, Flickr.com (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

7 TE WAIMATE MISSION
NEW ZEALAND’S FIRST FARM
Here at Te Waimate you will find the remains of a model English village built by missionaries. Our first farm was established by the Church Missionary Society to teach British farming practices and promote the ideals of Western civilisation to Māori. You can also walk in the footsteps of a famous visitor, the scientist and evolutionist Charles Darwin, who stayed here for the Christmas of 1835.

Photo Credit: Steve Burgess

8 KORORIPO HERITAGE PARK
A MEETING PLACE OF CULTURES
Kororipo Pā, Rewa’s Village, Stone Store, Kemp House
Set in the Kerikeri Basin, Kororipo Heritage Park is a place where Māori and Europeans lived side by side to trade and learn from each other. A site where important meetings have been held for hundreds of years. Explore Kororipo Pā once the fortress and headquarters of famed and feared Māori Chief Hongi Hika, see the Stone Store and historic Kemp House – New Zealand’s oldest standing European buildings – and walk the paths of Rewa’s Village, a replica Māori fishing village named after Ngāpuhi Chief Rewa.

Photo Credit: Steve Burgess

9 CLENDON HOUSE
HOME OF AN ENTERPRISING FAMILY
A glimpse into the fascinating life and aspirations of an early colonial family. This stylish residence was built in 1860 for Captain James Reddy Clendon and his wife Jane, who was of Hokianga Māori descent. After James’ death in 1872, Jane managed to raise their eight children alone, maintain the family’s business interests, and preserve their family home for future generations.