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## ■ HOKITIKA HERITAGE EXPERIENCE

Hokitika in Maori means “place of return” and once here you will see why. A self guided heritage walk takes you around the town’s most memorable buildings from the impressively restored Carnegie Building built in 1908 to the Custom House built in 1897 and sited on what was one of New Zealand’s busiest ports. Venture further for historical statues, sites and streets a shipwreck memorial at Sunset Point or pick up the Heritage Trail for an 11km ramble around the perimeter of the town to seek out the best of heritage and hike in one.

Looking for remnants of the past and tales of the land, the museum is the place to visit for a rich tapestry of life on the coast. World renowned audio visual captures the lives of those who came in search of gold, the hardships they endured and the dreams of a better life.

The hills, valleys and streams of the outer regions still hold gold so try your luck panning at the historic goldfields of Ross and Goldsbrough or venture deeper into our region for walking trails and relics of water races, tunnels and more.

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### **Clock Tower**

This centrepiece of Hokitika is a memorial to soldiers who fell in the Boer war 1899-1902 and commemorates the coronation of Edward VII. The memorial was officially unveiled by Premier Richard John Seddon and Mrs Seddon on 3rd June 1903



### **Police Camp**

The original Police Camp and Gaol was sited on Camp Street but a new Police Camp opened here in November 1867. The camp contained two lock up cells, accommodation for the men, a watchkeeper’s house and stabling for 10 horses. A fire in 1915 destroyed some of the buildings and the boundaries were later changed so that the Police Station was forced to share this corner site.



### **Government Buildings**

The construction of the first half of this building began in 1908 and the second half was completed several years later. Locally referred to as Seddon House, some government offices and Hokitika’s court house were based here. The last Magistrate’s Court session was held here in 1980 when this service was shifted to Greymouth.



### **Seddon Statue**

Richard John Seddon worked as a miner, storekeeper and hotel proprietor on the goldfields before becoming Mayor of Kumara in 1877. In 1879 he entered Parliament and by 1893 had risen to the position of Premier. He remained as Premier until his death in 1906. This memorial was erected in 1910.



### **Custom House**

Hokitika’s first Custom House was sited along Gibson Quay in July 1865. During the height of the gold rushes in the mid 1860’s, Hokitika was one of New Zealand’s busiest ports. In 1897 the present Custom House was built. This building was moved to its present site on the reconstructed quayside in 1985.



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## Cannon

This stationary bastion or fort cannon was made in Scotland in 1813 and was probably brought to New Zealand for use in the land wars of the 1860's. The Minister of Defence the Hon. R.J.Seddon presented the cannon to the town of Hokitika in 1894.



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## Shipwreck Memorial

This reconstruction of the schooner Tambo stands as a memorial to the 42 ships wrecked while trying to cross the Hokitika bar. The Tambo was beached on the south spit on 12th November 1866. The crew then secured her to an old anchor found buried in the sand. However, a fearsome tide and strong river currents forced the anchored ship out to sea again. Both the wrecked ship and the anchor were eventually washed up on the beach south of Ruatapu.



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## Signal Station Lookout

Hokitika was officially gazetted as a port on 8th March 1865 and work soon began on building a signal station at the river entrance. A combination of raised balls, coloured flags and painted arms were used to inform waiting ships of the prevailing conditions and to guide them safely over the hazardous sand bar and through the ever changing river channels.



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## Hudson and Price's Store

On 1 October 1864 John Hudson and James Price became Hokitika's first white residents when they set up their calico store on this site. The gold rushes soon followed and Hudson and Price were ideally situated to cash in on the influx of diggers. Price later returned to England but Hudson remained to watch the emergence of the town he had founded.



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## Revell Street

William Horton Revell, the government agent, magistrate and warden, supervised the laying out of Hokitika's first streets including the one which bears his name. The risk of fire sweeping through the calico, canvas and wood shanties during those early years was great and on 18th July 1869 the worst of these fires, known as the Great Fire of Revell Street, engulfed numerous buildings between Weld Street and Stafford Street. Added to the persistent sea front erosion which at times also endangered Revell Street properties.



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## Hotels

In 1866 Hokitika had 102 hotels and 84 of these were crammed into the narrow mile of Revell Street. Accommodation at some of these hotels was no more than a blanket and a spot on the floor or one of the dining tables. Later some of the hotels developed a more comfortable standard of lodgings, offered fine meals, and provided dance halls, roulette wheels, billiard tables, bowling alleys and other forms of entertainment. Many of the less reputable hotels began to congregate at the northern end of the street and began to give the area a bad reputation.



## Banks

A strong smell of money once prevailed around MacAndrew. Hokitika's first bank, the Bank of New South Wales, established a branch here in 1864 and 2 years later the Bank of New Zealand opened a branch directly opposite. The former Bank of NSW and BNZ buildings still stand opposite each other and date from 1905 and 1931 respectively. The National Bank, Union Bank, and the Hokitika Savings Bank have also had premises neighbouring MacAndrew Square.



## Town Hall

The Hokitika Town Hall formally stood on the Revell Street side of what is now called MacAndrews Square (named after Dr Herbert MacAndrew, Borough Councillor, Chairman of Reserves and voluntary museum curator). In 1869 a grand new Town Hall building was built here comprising the council chambers on the first floor and the library and museum on the second floor. The building gradually fell into disrepair and by 1964 lay empty. Damaged by fire in 1947, it was demolished not long after.



## Fire Station

The Hokitika Fire Brigade was first formed in November 1865. The engine house was originally sited in Revell Street on the south side of the town hall. In 1869 the fire station was moved to a site on Hamilton Street. Lighting struck the tower in 1875 resulting in a fire which destroyed the station house as well as the tower. However the new manual fire engine, "The Surprise", was saved. Despite having crashed down from the tower, the big fire bell was undamaged. The station has since been rebuilt twice in 1907 and 1950.



## Carnegie Building

Hokitika's Carnegie Free Public Library building was one of 18 libraries built in New Zealand with the assistance of Scottish-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. A competition was held to design the building and the plan submitted by Nelson architect A.R.Griffin was accepted. When the building was officially opened on the 24th June 1908, Mrs Michel, the wife of the Mayor, opened the front doors using a gold key. The building served as Hokitika's library until it closed in April 1975. It was later restored and reopened on 16th May 1998. and is home to the West Coast Historical Museum.



## Teichelmanns House

The house opposite the Carnegie Building was built by Dr Ebenezer Teichelmann who was a well known surgeon, mountaineer, and photographer. he was also a passenger aboard the aeroplane "Blazing Arrow" during the first flight over the Glaciers in 1924. This house was later owned by Brian Waugh, who was chief pilot for the Hokitika based aviation company West Coast Airways.



## Statue of Summer

The statue of "Summer" was erected in November 1925 to commemorate the important events in the history of Westland which occurred during 1923-4. These included the Jubilee of Westland, the opening of the rail link between the East and West Coasts, and the holding of the British and Intercolonial Exhibition in Hokitika. During the exhibition the "Blazing Arrow" biplane also made the first flight over Hokitika.



## Seaview

At Seaview you will discover the old lighthouse, the Explorers Monument and the local cemetery. The lighthouse was built in 1879 and ceased operating in October 1924. The Explorers Monument was erected in 1868 on the site where the town clock now stands. In 1880 it was moved to the cemetery entrance. The monument is inscribed with the names of government agents, engineers and surveyors who were drowned or murdered in the course of their work. Many of Hokitika's famous pioneers are interred at the Seaview Cemetery.



## Hokitika Airport

A replica of a Fox Moth biplane (ZD-ADI) is located at the Hokitika Airport. This memorial is a replica of the first aircraft used by Bert Mercer's company Air Travel (NZ) Ltd which operated from the old Southside aerodrome. The replica was unveiled on 17th December 1994 during the South Westland Air Service celebrations in memory of Hokitika's pioneering aviators.



## Pioneer Statue

This monument is a memorial to the early pioneers of the West Coast. It was erected in 1914 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Westland and the official opening was planned for Easter Tuesday. However bad weather and the perilous sea encroachment which threatened buildings on Revell Street during 1914 caused the opening ceremony to be delayed. It was finally unveiled on the 8th July 1914.



## Cass Square

Cass Square is named after Thomas Cass who was Commissioner of Crown Lands in Canterbury (which at that time also included Westland). Places of interest within Cass Square include the Cenotaph memorial to soldiers who died in the First World War. The official unveiling was planned for ANZAC Day but 1 of the 13 pieces was lost in transit from Italy. The opening had to be postponed until the missing block was recovered. The memorial was finally unveiled on the 11th November 1922. Also in Cass Square is a white marble statue in memory of the Scottish poet Robert Burns. This statue was unveiled on the 4th of June in 1923.



## Old Southside Aerodrome

"Mac" McGregor made the first landing at the new Southside aerodrome in January 1932 but this airfield is most famous as home of New Zealand's first licensed air service, Air Travel (NZ) Ltd, which operated here from 1934 to 1947. The company was then taken over by the National Airways Corporation which continued to use this strip until the new Seaview airport was opened in 1951. The memorial and information panels situated here were unveiled on the 18th December 1994 as part of the South Westland Air Service Celebrations.

