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Review of: Pilgrimage Aotearoa. Haerenga Tapu Aotearoa: Your Guide to 100 New Zealand Sites, by Jenny Boyack and John Hornblow

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Review of: *Pilgrimage Aotearoa. Haerenga Tapu Aotearoa: Your Guide to 100 New Zealand Sites*, by Jenny Boyack and John Hornblow

Boyack, J. and Hornblow, J. (2024) *Pilgrimage Aotearoa. Haerenga Tapu Aotearoa: Your Guide to 100 New Zealand Sites*, Philip Garside Publishing, Wellington, New Zealand. 224 pages NZ\$49.50 www.pilgrimagenz.nz



Retired Anglican Priest John Hornblow and his teacher educator partner, Jenny Boyack, have graced us with a most innovative and important new book on sacred journeys. Having been involved with the planning and leading of international pilgrimages for many years, in particular in the Holy Land, Italy, UK, Greece, and Turkey, the couple have now turned their attention to the home front, providing detailed information on 100 exceptional pilgrimage sites from all corners of New Zealand Aotearoa, the land of the long white cloud.

This timely and resource-rich pilgrim guide, introduced by Archbishop Emeritus Sir David Moxon, is the first of its kind in New Zealand. It is an essential read not just for the Maori (Indigenous) and Pakeha (non-Indigenous) New Zealanders, but for all potential visitors who wish to enrich their understanding of sacred places, identity, belonging, and destiny.

The beautifully illustrated color pilgrimage guide divides the entire country into 21 regions, from the larger cities of Auckland and Wellington to the remotest islands of Chatham and Stewart, to the Waitangi Treaty Grounds, the monument of a Burned Whare (meeting house) in Rangiaowhia, places linked to important historic figures, and significant churches dating back to the nineteenth century. Finally, the authors provide guidance for the readers to create their own pilgrimage place in New Zealand Aotearoa. They describe a broad range of preconditions, such as the need to consider places

where people of various faith communities gather, civic or communal spaces where the pilgrim can reflect on the values that guide the community, a church with a special story or feature, a local marae (sacred meeting ground) or another place of special significance to the iwi (tribe or nation). It might also be a grave of someone who has made a substantial contribution to the growth of the community, or an outdoor space that has special environmental significance. The authors then ask about the vision of the desired pilgrimage, who can assist in planning and marketing, how many people can be accommodated, and how will these people access the site. Are basic facilities available like toilets, parking, and refreshments? When is the best time of year to visit the site and who has responsibility for maintaining it? Who would be interested in such a pilgrimage and what might their expectations be?

The real strength of this pilgrimage guide is in the way that it makes it easy for the visitor to access these sites of significance. The book creates opportunities for them to discover, often for the very first time, important stories of the people and events that have shaped New Zealand Aotearoa from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives. Many of these sites are truly inspiring, while others fill the reader with a sense of remorse for injustices executed under the guise of colonization. Some sites connect the pilgrim with the earliest of Christian missionaries, while others educate them on pre-European Maori history and culture, but throughout, there is a

determined effort to highlight the interwoven past, present and future of all New Zealanders. The bibliography at the end of the book provides a useful resource for those wishing to learn more about this complex history.

For this reviewer, one of the strongest sections in the guide is the discussion of the concept of the pilgrimage from the point of view of Maori, where it is known as hikoi. World attention was focused on New Zealand Aotearoa in November 2024, when hundreds of thousands of Maori and allies marched against proposed new government policies affecting them, the culmination of a year's planning.

The concept of hikoi, purposeful walks to sacred places, is a firmly embedded cultural practice in the Maori worldview. In early colonial times, Maori Christians would sometimes embark upon a hikoi to promote reconciliation in line with the traditional practice of utu or repaying a favor or seeking revenge. Prior to the famous 2024 hikoi, which culminated in the performance of a Maori haka or dance in the parliament house that garnered millions of views on global social media, there were three significant nationwide hikoi meant to address social injustice in the country. The first, which involved walking the length of the North Island, was in 1975, and was linked to the dark legacy of land confiscations. Then in 1998 there was the Anglican Church's pilgrimage of hope to raise awareness of the suffering of the first peoples. Finally, in 2004, 15,000 people joined a hikoi from Northland to Wellington, the nation's capital, to protest legislation that would shift ownership of the country's foreshore to the Crown. As the authors say, these hikoi were all testament to the power of pilgrimage to fire the imagination of participants and observers, and to provoke political and social change.

A typical entry in the guide is the pilgrimage to the Maunganui Stone Cottage of Chatham Islands / Rekohu. The author's provide details of the story of what is perhaps the most unique place in New Zealand Aotearoa. In January 1843, three Lutheran missionaries from Germany brave the wild seas to begin their missionary work among the Indigenous inhabitants. All had valuable skills including toolsmith, carpenter, painter, farmer and schoolteacher. Their priorities were to build houses and learn the local language. By 1846, their farming activities were paying off and attracting trade from visiting Australian ships. That year, three deaconesses arrived by ship to help with the mission and soon there were three weddings. By the mid-1850s, a number of factors made the mission unviable, but their legacy of horticulture, sheep farming, ship building, and literacy was notable. The pilgrimage guide includes details on how to reach this extremely remote spot, how to make an appointment to visit, the per person entry fee, website, and background reading on the Moriori, the Indigenous peoples who preceded the Maori. There is also a section guiding the reader's reflection on the missionary experience as they brought the Gospel to the island.

John Hornblow and Jenny Boyack have made a substantial contribution with this fine pilgrimage guide and it is highly recommended to pilgrims and tourists alike, especially those wishing to have a deeper engagement with the land and history of the land of the long white cloud.

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