

OMAUI RESERVE



Omaui Reserve is of historical significance to the Omaui area ever since it became the first gateway to Invercargill. Omaui township was originally occupied as a settlement by Maori and later by Europeans as a whaling base, pilot station and health camp.

Omaui Reserve complements the adjacent Omaui Scenic Reserve (Department of Conservation) which is considered significant as the largest tract of bush in Invercargill City.

Location:

221 Mokokoko Road

History

History records that the quiet settlement of Omaui, situated on the east bank of the Oreti Estuary, was first documented by Robert Williams in 1813 while investigating the possibility of a flax industry in New Zealand.

The township of Omaui was originally a small Maori fishing village and is an important location in Maori tradition. This village was visited by early settlers in search of flax and became a whaling station site for a single year in 1837.

Ngai Tahu ki Murihiku recognise Omaui as one of their most important sites in Southland. Omaui was named after their ancestor Maui Tikitiki. The village was handy to forests and the coast where trees, birds, flax, medicines, seafood and stone resources were gathered.

Omaui Island (the place of Maui) is an outcrop of rock visible just outside the estuary mouth and is said to be the oldest Maori name in the south.

Omaui beach became the final resting place for the steamer 'Guiding Star' in 1862. Originally named the 'SS Oberon', this unfortunate vessel had been holed while entering Bluff Harbour the previous year. She was finally wrecked after striking a rock near Bombay Rock (off Omaui beach) and beached by her captain alongside Omaui village. Her boiler is sometimes exposed by shifting sand.

Archaeological sites, such as midden/ovens and oral traditions, suggest Maori have had a long association with Omaui since their arrival in the South Island.

Omaui Reserve is an important continuation of the coastal ecosystem in the area.

Facilities

For more information on the walking track please see the Short Walks brochure for a plan and description.



Toilets



Parking



Views



Interpretation



Picnic facilities



Dog on lead



Remove any dog waste

Council appreciates that you take your rubbish with you.



Omaui Reserve is managed by
Invercargill City Council Parks Division

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E: parks@icc.govt.nz

W: www.icc.govt.nz (for more information,
including Management Plan)