

## Stubbs Bridge - Mangatangi River



The first bridge across the Mangatangi River was built in 1922. Prior to that date all traffic had to ford the river just upstream of the present bridge. This was often a challenge as the river was prone to quick flooding and carried twice the current flow compared to now. The current is now being controlled with the Mangatangi Dam and reservoir.

Mr. George Stubbs was a successful business man in Taranaki before moving to Mangatangi where he set up the Mangatangi Land Co. He was considered to be the father of Mangatangi and was responsible for a number of local initiatives. As proper access to the district was an obstacle to progress Mr Stubbs lobbied long and hard to have the local council build the wooden one-way bridge and ended up taking on the task of supervising the construction as no reasonable tenders eventuated.

The Hon. Bob Semple represented Government at the opening. The bridged served the district well until February 1966 when 300mm of rain over less than 24 hours sent a flash flood down the valley, washing away bridge abutments and making the structure unsafe. The flood caused extensive damage to the nearby Maori village but fortunately with no loss of life. The replacement bridge was completed in 1967.

For further information visit [www.mangatangi.org.nz](http://www.mangatangi.org.nz)