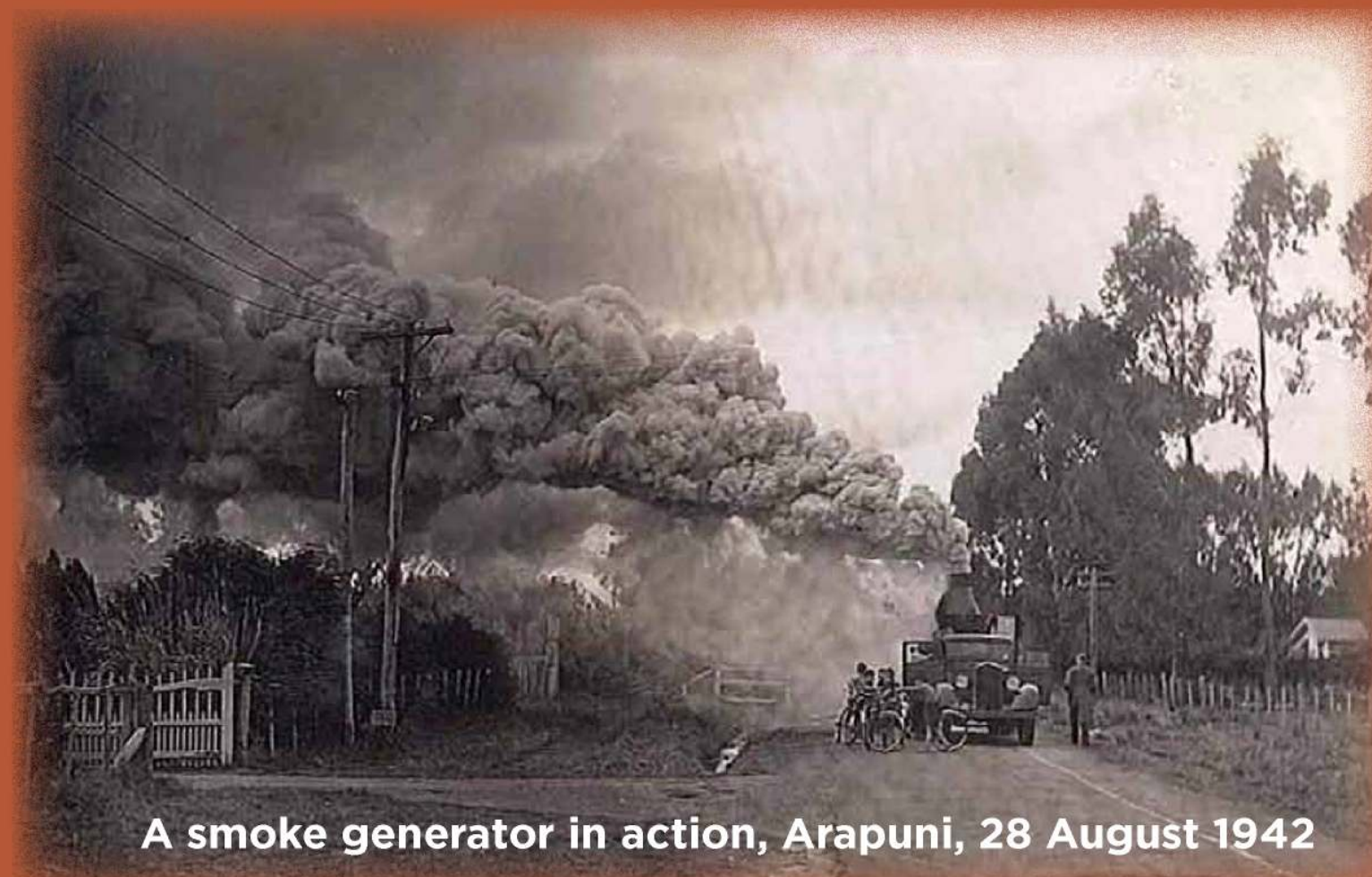




Waikato River Trails

Arapuni – the dam that disappeared



A smoke generator in action, Arapuni, 28 August 1942

Hiding a powerhouse



Spot the powerhouse. Arapuni Powerhouse in full camouflage during World War II

Did you know the Arapuni Dam Powerhouse was camouflaged during WW11 to prevent it being targeted during possible Japanese air strikes?

So how was this achieved?

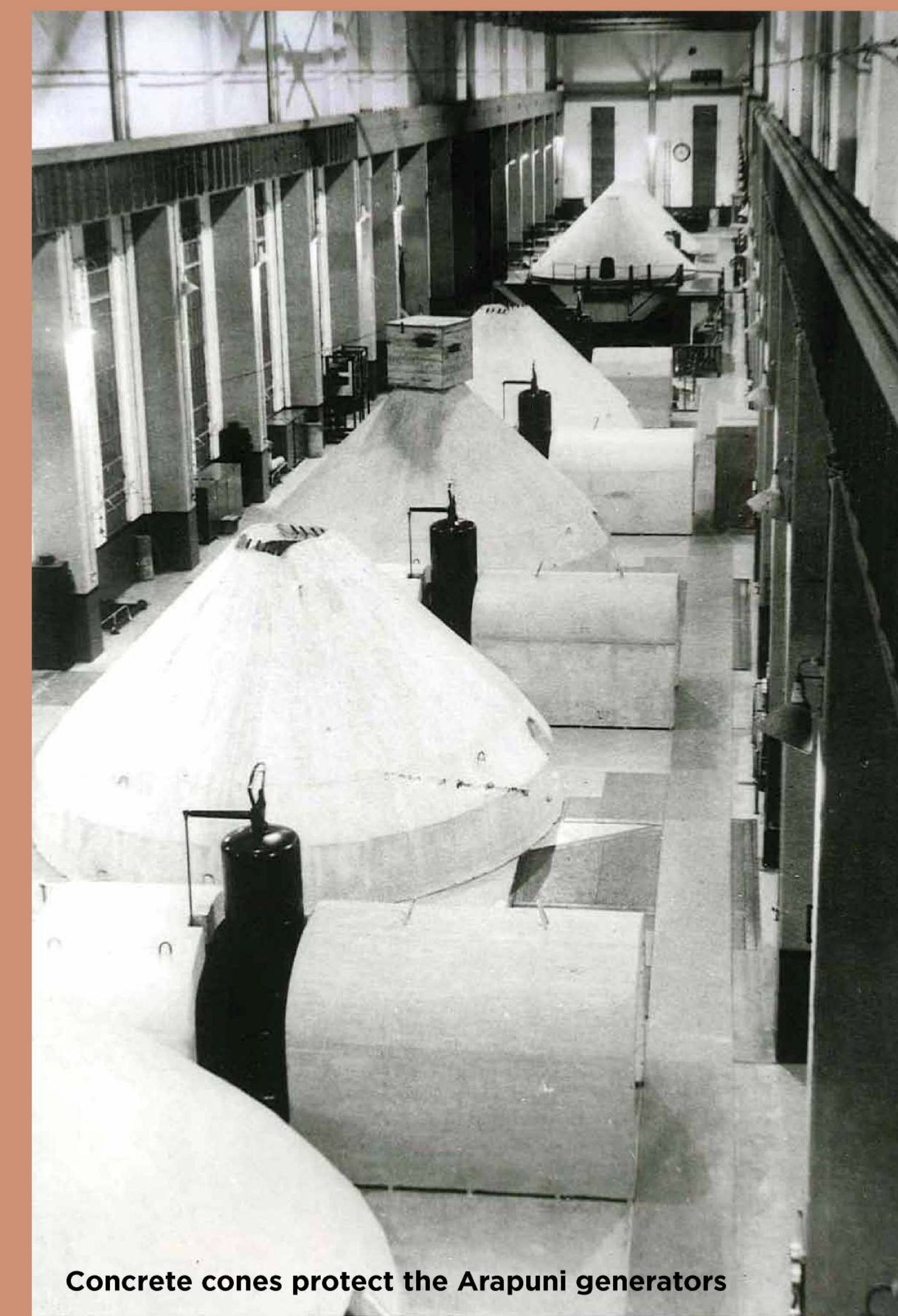
- Masses of foliage were placed on top of the powerhouse to provide camouflage and the building was painted in camouflage colours
- Concrete cones were positioned over the generators
- Smoke generators were put into action near Arapuni Hall in the early 1940s to create a smoke screen.

The Japanese didn't visit and the powerhouse and dam survived the war unscathed going on to years later be awarded a Category 1 listing on the Historic Places Trust. Arapuni is one of the few generating power stations in New Zealand to be listed on the register.

Preparing for invasion

Former Putaruru councillor, mayor and Waikato Regional Councillor Jim Howland, who spent “quite a lot of time” as a youngster around Arapuni during the war, remembers the camouflaged powerhouse.

“I remember thinking it was well done. At the time we were also digging trenches around our school (Putaruru district school). We were meant to jump in the trenches if the Japanese attacked the town. So the camouflaged power station was all part of the war story really.”



Concrete cones protect the Arapuni generators

Photos supplied by Mighty River Power