

= The Pioneer Mother Memorial =

The Pioneer Mother Memorial , also known as Pioneer Mother and Pioneer Mothers , is a 1928 bronze sculpture by American artist Avard Fairbanks , installed at Esther Short Park in Vancouver , Washington , in the United States . The memorial depicts a mother and three children , and commemorates pioneer mothers who settled in the Pacific Northwest . The main female figure may depict Esther Short , one of the first U.S. citizens to arrive in Fort Vancouver . Commissioned by Vancouver banker Edward Crawford and his wife Ida for \$ 10 @, @ 000 , it is one of the city 's oldest works of public art , acquired in 1928 and unveiled in 1929 . The sculpture was renovated around the start of the 21st century and is maintained by the City of Vancouver 's Parks & Recreation department .

= = Description = =

The Pioneer Mother Memorial is installed at Esther Short Park 's north entrance , at the intersection of West 8th and Daniel Street (between Columbia and Esther Streets) in Vancouver , Washington . The park commemorates the pioneer woman and her husband Amos , who were among the first U.S. citizens to arrive in Fort Vancouver . Some sources say the memorial sculpture commemorates Esther Short specifically , while also " [typifying] all the brave mothers of the frontier " who settled in the Pacific Northwest . Some sources say the sculpture 's main female figure is Short herself , per the dedication ceremony 's program . The sculpture was cast in Florence , Italy , where Fairbanks was working on his Guggenheim Fellowship .

The memorial features a full @-@ length bronze figure depicting a mother and three children . The woman wears traditional pioneer clothing , including a long dress , shawl , and shoes . She stands , facing forward , and holds a flintlock rifle in her proper right hand . The woman 's opposite hand rests on the head of the taller of two girls at her proper left side . The taller girl holds the shorter one with her proper left hand , while the shorter girl faces the taller one and rests against the mother 's proper left knee . A young boy clings to the mother 's dress and leans against her rifle . The sculpture measures approximately 7 feet (2 @.@ 1 m) × 3 feet (0 @.@ 91 m) × 21 inches (53 cm) and rests on a concrete and granite base that measures approximately 102 inches (2 @.@ 6 m) × 18 feet (5 @.@ 5 m) × 15 feet (4 @.@ 6 m) .

Behind the figure group is a concrete backdrop . Its reverse side includes a bronze medallion with a bas @-@ relief depicting a team of oxen pulling a covered wagon . The animals are led by a man , and an " anxious " woman and baby are in the wagon . A large barrel is attached to the wagon . The bottom of the medallion includes a relief of a cattle skull . The medallion has a diameter of approximately 36 inches (91 cm) .

The memorial includes several inscriptions . One by the woman 's foot reads , Avard Fairbanks / 1928 . The medallion has two inscriptions : one below the wagon displays a copyright symbol and reads , 1928 Avard Fairbanks , while another says , THE / PIONEER / MOTHERS . On the concrete backdrop below the medallion is the signed inscription : ERECTED IN MEMORY OF / THE PIONEER MOTHERS / THROUGH THE GIFT OF / MR. & MRS. E. G. CRAWFORD / 1928 .

= = History = =

The Pioneer Mother Memorial is one of Vancouver 's oldest works of public art (the oldest , according to the Clark County Historical Museum) , acquired in 1928 and unveiled on July 21 , 1929 (or September 7 , according to some sources) . Fairbanks attended the ceremony . The artist was commissioned to create the memorial by Vancouver banker Edward Crawford and his wife Ida , who donated \$ 10 @, @ 000 to its creation .

The work was classified as needing treatment by the Smithsonian Institution 's " Save Outdoor Sculpture ! " program in May 1995 . It was renovated as part of park improvement efforts around the start of the 21st century . The memorial is maintained by the City of Vancouver 's Parks & Recreation department .

