APPENDIX C

Document bundle

Wai 3444

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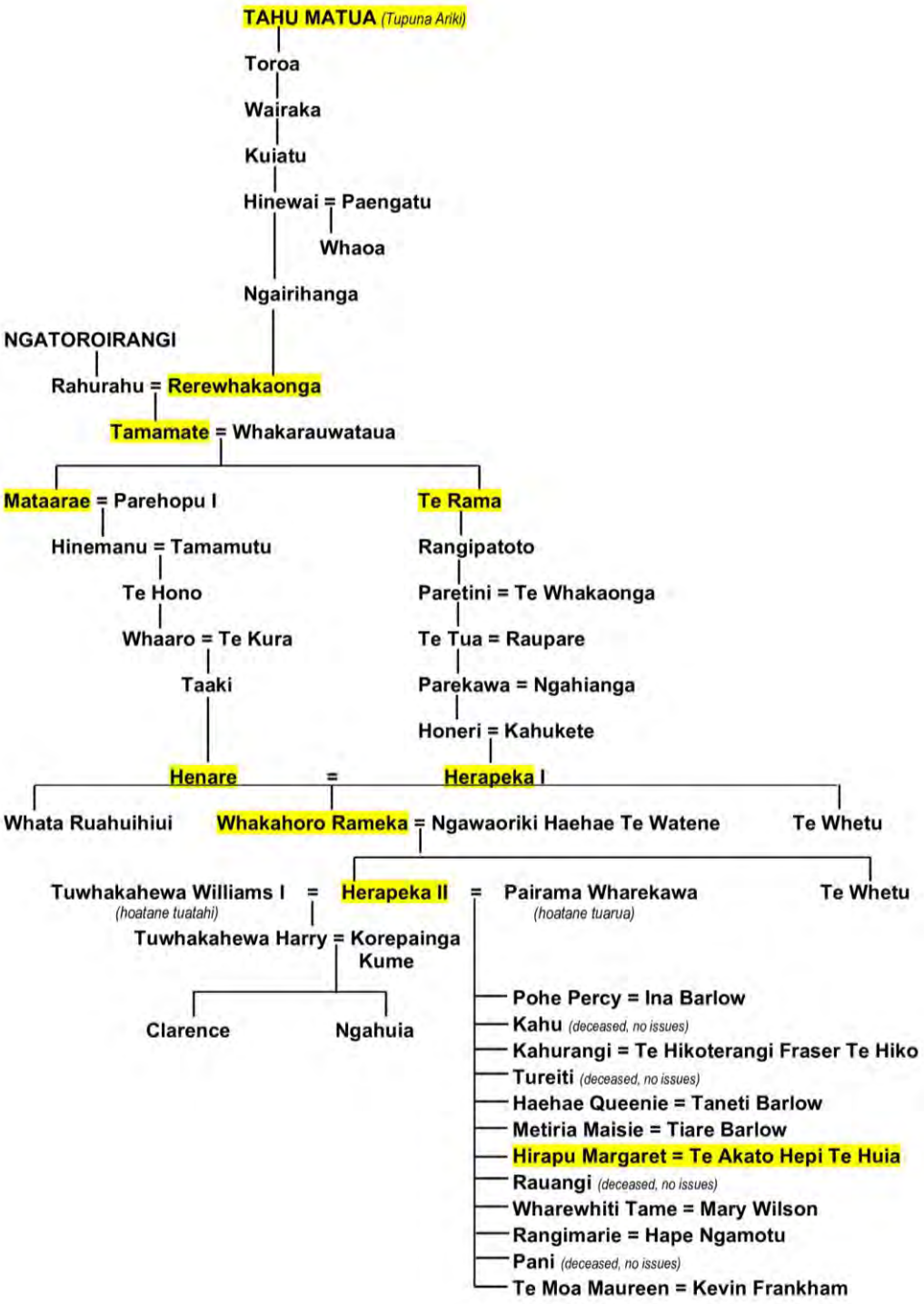
Document 1

Teenaa koutou — the following Whakapapa and whakaahua are provided to validate the verbal korero given by Marg Paahi and Jo Te Huia on 16 September 2025 regarding Orakei Korako. Marg and Jo were raised at Orakei Korako by their Kuia Herapeka Rameka Henare and Koroua Pairama Wharekawa. In December 1960, the iwi of Ngati Tahu (as they were widely known then) celebrated their last Christmas at Orakei Korako because the Iwi knew that the Wharekawa Whanau were being forced to leave their uukaipoo by January 1961. Under the Public Works Act 1864 issued by ECNZ, it stated that, "*Their whare would be under water*". The raising of Lake Ohakuri was completed by the end of February 1961 and did not flood the Wharekawa whare. Herapeka and Pairama Wharekawa left Orakei Korako in January 1961 and never returned. Our Whakapapa is provided for these purposes only.



Document 2

Herapeka and Pairama Wharekawa, on the side of the river where their whare stood. Across the river behind them are the Orakei Korako terraces.

Herapeka Wharekawa – washing in one of the bathing pools.

Pairama Wharekawa with the last deer he caught prior to the Christmas celebration of Dec 1960

Herapeka Wharekawa holding the greenstone gifted to her father, Whakahoro Rameka Henare, by the Iwi of Te Waipounamu on one of their excursions to barter for kookoowai (red ochre) for their marae.
Orakei Korako was one of only two locations in Aotearoa that had kookoowai in abundance, with many Iwi travelling here for it – Whakahoro was its 'gatherer'. This greenstone heirloom is held by the eldest granddaughter of Herapeka and Pairama.

Pairama Wharekawa with a normal sized tuna that was abundant in Orakei Korako at the time. This one is about to be prepared for the final Ngati Tahu Iwi Christmas celebration at Orakei Korako in Dec 1960.

Whakahoro Rameka Henare was the first Aapotoro Reehita Raatana for Ngati Tahu and also the first 'guide' in Orakei Korako for the English tourists who travelled from Rotorua by stage coach to see the many geysers and geothermal formations there.

During the flu epidemic of 1918, Orakei Korako suffered devastating losses. While the whanau of 'Te Whare Toroa' left Orakei Korako to save the remainder of their Iwi, Whakahoro stayed as he was not afflicted by the flu. He buried his people in two enormous burial mounds above Orakei Korako before departing.

Prior to his death in 1951 aged 109, he asked his only daughter, Herapeka, to return to Orakei Korako, "*Hei ahi kaa roa moo toona Iwi o Ngati Tahu*".

Teenaa tatou

Ko Orākei Kōrako te Ūkaipo o Ngāti Tahu

Pairama & Herapeka Wharekawa were the last surviving whanau to have **ahikāroa of Orakei Korako. Herapeka is the eldest child of Whakahoro Rameka** Henare & Ngawaoriki Haehae Watene. Whakahoro lived at Orakei Korako from 1901 & was also a guide there. He was also the first Ngati Tahu Ratana minister. Because Whakahoro was the only person not afflicted by the flu pandemic of 1918, he became responsible for burying those who died. Pairama & Herapeka returned to Orakei Korako in 1921at the insistence of her father, Whakahoro, to **continue ahikāroa for Ngati Tahu.** Whakahoro remained at Orakei Korako until his death in 1951, aged 109—he is buried at the highest point at Te Ohaaki urupa. Haehae died in 1926 & is buried at Ongaroto urupa. Orakei Korako was taken under the Public Works Act in 1960 to create Lake Ohakuri at which time Pairama & Herapeka **were forced to leave their beloved Ūkaipo**, thereby **extinguishing their ahikāroa**. They are buried together at Nukuhau urupa in Taupo.

Document 3

Home For 40 Years To Be Flooded

Maori Couple Must Leave Orakeikorako

Staff Reporter — Rotorua

The home of a Maori couple who have lived among the steaming pools and geysers of Orakeikorako for almost 40 years will be flooded out when the big lake behind the Ohakuri dam is filled.

George and Sarah Wharekawa believe that this Christmas will be their last in their 60-year-old house on the left bank of the Waikato River.

Although the scheduled commissioning date for the Ohakuri project is April, 1961, they think that, with the scheme ahead of schedule, the lake may be filled some time next year.

Accordingly they plan to invite all their relatives, including six daughters and two sons, to spend Christmas together at the old home.

Once Big Settlement

"We won't like leaving after being here so long," said Mr Wharekawa, "but I suppose the country has to have electricity." They themselves have never had the benefit of a power supply.

Many years ago there was a big Maori settlement at Orakeikorako, with a meeting house on the eight-acre area of flat land where the Wharekawas live. Most of the inhabitants lived on the hill just above.

Mrs Wharekawa has lived at Orakeikorako all her life and her father, Rameka Henare, who died eight years ago aged 109, had a clear recollection of activities in the old settlement.

No one seems to know why or when the settlement broke up, but for many years now the Wharekawas have been the only Maoris living there.

The major thermal activity at Orakeikorako is on the right bank of the river, but on the left bank also there are many hot pools and geysers. Mr and Mrs Wharekawa's major activity recently has been guiding tourists around those attractions.

Move to Taupo

They have also developed the flat area behind the house as a big garden. At one time, when they had a horse, this garden covered most of the area, but now there is just enough left to provide for their own needs.

The 40-foot rise in the level of the Waikato at Orakeikorako on the filling of Ohakuri will bring the water up to the window ledges of the old house. Then Mr and Mrs Wharekawa plan to live at Taupo, where they have land.

Ko Orākei Kōrako te Ūkaipo o Ngāti Tahu

Tenei te mihi nunui rawa atu ki a ratou mā, ōku tūpuna, ōku kaumātua hoki; haere atu ra, haere atu ra; moe mai ra…

Mai i te waiheke o Huka
Whakarawhiti atu ki te mania o Kaingaroa
Heke mai nei ki te tihi o Maunga Kakaramea
Puta atu ki te Pae Maunga o Paeroa
Orakei Korako te Ukaipo
Tae rawa atu ki Pohaturoa ki Atiamuri
Ko te awa o Waikato e pokarekare nei i waenganui

Na Makere Paahi te korero nei o tenei ra – 17 Feb 2017

Document 4

Geothermal land fight still boiling

The famous Orakei Korako geothermal valley, near Rotorua, is up for sale. Angry Maori are fighting for the return of part of the land, seized 34 years ago by the Crown for hydro-electricity needs. BRIAN RUDMAN reports

ONE Thursday lunchtime, late in January 1961, the men from the Ministry of Works put the torch to George and Sarah Wharekawa's old home on the banks of the Waikato River at Orakei Korako, 55km downstream from Taupo.

At the bottom of George's garden — where vegetables used to share space with such exotics as peanuts and tobacco — the multi-coloured mudpools plopped away, as they had, as far back as anyone could remember.

But the workers hardly noticed. They were too busy cutting down the family's old apple tree and stacking the branches against the cottage. Inside, others were stacking dry timber and splashing diesel oil about.

It took only a few minutes to turn the 60-year-old heart totara building into an inferno, as dreadful as any of the sights on display at the adjacent thermal wonderland.

Luckily, the traditional pataka (storehouse), last remnant of the thriving Ngati Tahu village that had once occupied the site, had been dismantled for safekeeping by a young DSIR scientist, Ted Lloyd.

It was all legal. Under the Public Works Act, this was just one of several pieces of land seized from the Ngati Tahu and other landowners to make way, in the words of the official proclamation, "for the development of waterpower".

The Wharekawas had been told the water from the new Lake Ohakuri would rise 30 metres, to lap the window sills of their home. They would have to go for the sake of the national grid. The reality turned out to be rather different. The waters stopped short of the old house site, and within a year or so of the Wharekawas' eviction from their ancestral land, the Electricity Department had leased their 2.7ha to tourist operators, as a base for launching trips to the thermal field across the lake.

SARAH WHAREKAWA and the home she lost

George and Sarah are dead now. But 34 years — and endless battles with Government bureaucrats — later, their descendants are still trying to persuade the Crown to give the land back to them. They argue that by law, land compulsorily seized for public works but later found to be surplus to the requirements for which it was seized, must be offered back to the original owners.

In February 1989, the Department of Lands wrote to them, agreeing the land should be "revested" back to the old owners. But it wasn't. In true Kafkaresque reasoning, the Crown says it can't offer the land back, even if it thinks it should, because it, the Crown, hasn't yet declared the land surplus to its requirements.

Earlier this year, Ngati Tahu lawyer Tim Kinder felt he was finally making headway in his discussions with the new Crown agents, the Department of Survey and Land Information. That was until he caught sight of a glossy brochure advertising the Orakei Korako tourist complex for sale. In the small print he discovered the department had given the tourist operators a new 33-year lease — with a right of renewal for a further 33 years — dated from January 1, 1994, on the disputed land.

The Friday before last, the Maori Land Court granted the Ngati Tahu claimants an injunction against the lease being finalised. The claimants argued that the Crown, because of earlier promises to return the land to its previous owners, held the land as trustees for the Ngati Tahu. They want the court to consider whether the Crown has acted in the "owners'" best interests, in negotiating the long lease without consultation.

The action, coinciding as it did with the closing days of the tender for the sale of the whole property, drew an angry response from resort co-owner Tim Boddy, who claimed the Ngati Tahu were using sabotage tactics to stall the sale by creating reluctance among buyers.

Ngati Tahu spokesman Timoti Rangitakatu's response was blunt. They were not trying to stall the sale. They were trying to stop it.

For Sarah Wharekawa, the Christmas of 1960 was a season of mixed emotions. Her two sons and six daughters had returned home from around the country with their children, to spend a final reunion at the old family home. Mrs Wharekawa's father, Rameka Henere, the last chief of the Ngati Tahu, had died there in the early 1950s, aged 109. He had opened the thermal wonders to tourists, ferrying them across to the eastern side of the river by canoe. This was the site of a village once housing 1000 people. She had lived there all her life.

Reg Palmer, the Wharekawas' neighbour at the time, ran the commercial tourist operation at Orakei Korako, and spent many evenings with the couple. He recalls that "when I spoke to them about it, they told me Maori Affairs had offered them a lovely new home in Taupo and new furniture if they went".

It was not to be. When they got to Taupo, they found themselves in temporary accommodation in a Ministry of Works house. A tribal elder, Mr Stan Carter, complained that permanent housing for them "can only be accomplished by overcoming the apathy of Government departments". It seems apathy won out.

Granddaughter Jan Wharekawa says that after two years they moved into a small rental flat. As for furniture, that was second-hand, arranged by friends on time payment through a local auction house. Compensation of £800 finally came through, about four years after the forced move.

Says Mr Palmer: "The Wharekawas had to leave because the lake was supposed to flood their place. It didn't. Their old thermal bath house still survives."

The year after the lake was filled, "we approached the Electricity Department for a lease on the Wharekawa land. We got it and put two prefabricated motel units on it. Subsequently, a shop was built below the site of the old house. How did they allow us to do that, when they'd told the Wharekawas the area would be flooded?"

Mr Palmer says he felt embarrassed about the lease. "I was a great friend of the Wharekawas. I've had more happy times in that place than in any other house I've ever been in."

He recalls the cooking pools — of varying temperatures, to suit the dish. "If you wanted to singe a wild pig, there was a pool just right for the job."

Mrs Wharekawa was proud of her steam hangi. "It's a good oven," she told a reporter. "There is no sulphur smell like the Rotorua ones."

"The old lady came back only once to see us," says Mr Palmer. "It was about a year after the flooding. She only stayed an hour. For most of the time she was in tears. It was a very sad occasion. She loved that valley. What happened was quite scandalous."

Tourists

Jan Wharekawa learned English at her grandparents' place, while escorting tourists around the thermal areas below the house, now covered by the lake. "I was just 10 or 11 and when the tourists arrived, Kuia would send us out to fill up empty Vicks bottles with coloured clay. We had greens and purple and blue — a rainbow of colours. We'd sell them for a shilling or so."

Since 1986, Jan Wharekawa and other members of her tribe have turned up the heat in the fight for the return of this 2.7ha. "It's not real estate, it's turangawaewae to me. It's heart and soul stuff. This is the last opportunity for us to reinstate what is not only physically ours, but spiritually ours as well."

Mr Sam Brown, national director of Survey and Land Information, argues the land is not surplus to electricity needs. "It forms part of the Lake Ohakuri lake bed at the moment, even though it's above it."

In peak flood conditions — which he agrees haven't occurred in 34 years — the area might be under water. Surveying is currently under way "to identify what is exactly above water level and where the design flood level is."

The leases were granted with the tenant aware that "they may be periodically flooded. That was the lessee's risk."

Mr Brown says in that the future, the Crown might be able to transfer its interest in the lease to the Ngati Tahu. But that would be subject to easements on the title, securing ECNZ water storage needs.

GRANDDAUGHTER Jan Wharekawa. The pataka (storehouse) in the background was dismantled and taken away for safekeeping before the torching

Sunday Star times
19 June 1994