

OFFICIAL

Wai 898, # F7

Nga Korero mo Mokau, Mai Raano.

Na Hinekahukura Aranui

Claimant # 2012.

Ko Te Atua taku piringa,
Ko Tuheitia e mau ana i te Korowai Maori Motuhake,
Ko Te Kanawa e awahi mai ana i taku tuara,
Ko Maniapoto te iwi e ngunguru nei, e ngunguru nei,
Tihei Mauri ora!!

Tena koutou te tepu e whakarongo nei,
A taatari nei i nga taonga tuku o ratou ma.
Kua mihia nga mihi, kua ringihia nga roimata,
Kua tae ki te waa e korerohia ai nga korero,
I rangona i aau e tamariki ana.

SO WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Many years ago now, as I sat at the feet of my uncle, parents and respected elders of Mokau, I heard many a story that answered the queries of a child who was not able to run and play like the rest of her peers. Stories that have not been written and was spoken about only in the solemnity of a kaumatua hui called together by the kuia Waikowhai. She had a sharp tongue and when she asked for a hui to be held, everyone came. The children, teenagers and all knew they had to prepare food while others were sent to the beach to gather pipi from a special place. There were many of these hui held at odd times, and at most I was able to listen to those fascinating stories shared by these wonderful storytellers. Perhaps I was meant to listen, but after listening to the first ones I was sucked in; I didn't want to miss any of them.



So what are these stories? They didn't always come in correct sequence, but stories I heard and remember now. Recently, about 12 years ago, I heard a portion of the jigsaw which now fits into a story I heard then in the 1940's. Many stories have been told about our Tainui canoe and how it landed here and stayed for a time. We don't know how long, but we do know that while here, Hoturoa sent some of his men to Parininihi to explore, and to plant a pohutukawa tree. While he was here in Mokau he placed some poles into the ground, not far from where he first dragged the canoe out of the water. The place is still called Te Wehenga, although not many people know of it. The poles eventually became trees and were then called Nga Neke o Tainui, or *The Duck-boards of Tainui*. During the discussions heard at the time, a person asked the question, "He aha te take i poua ai nga neke o te waka?" The answer was swift. "Hei tohu i te waahi i tae mai ai rarou." As I heard the different stories about the journey of Tainui in later years I have realized that Hoturoa had already been told about the areas he was to travel to. So my surmise is that he was already told to set boundaries which the whanau within Tainui was to live and expand. Kupe had done his homework and had already explored the island and gone home to tell of this wonderfully virgin part of the land. Other canoes had gone to their designated places so why not Tainui? The pohutukawa tree at Parininihi would certainly designate a west coastal southern boundary for Tainui. Nevertheless Nga Neke o Tainui are definite boundary posts for Tainui because up until the early '40s these trees did not grow anywhere else in New Zealand. So with the korero from my Mokau elders and other korero from elders in Torere and Tauranga one is able to piece together some interesting information indeed.

It was from my Mokau elders that I also found out that it was Hiaroa, Rakataura's sister, who placed the Mauri Manu on Kahuwera. Whether the name Kahuwera was "He Kaahu Era" or not, is debateable as Kahuwera meaning a burnt cloak does not seem to sit right. However that is what

makes one ask "What's in a name?" While we are on the subject of names I would like to correct an anomaly that sets Piopio as a place where the New Zealand sparrow is supposed to be living. That name was actually given to that place because a whole patch of potatoes were singed by a late frost. Piopio was known to have grown some beautiful potatoes, but that year they were not great at all. What does that tell us? There must have been a number of people living there in Piopio to be growing such a large patch of potatoes.

Napinapi also has an interesting explanation. "*I napinapihia mai nga whanau kia noho mai ki raro i nga waewae o Kahuwera: hei tiaki i te mauiri i poua mai e nga maatua tupuna.*" Here again we have a number of people settling in a place that became a papakainga. That place is not far from Arapae a fortification that protected the "highway" from or to, Waikato and Taranaki. People moved by using natural waterways that opened up for them. Mangapu River links in with Waipa in Otorohanga. The source of the Mangapu is just a short walking distance from the Mokau, not far from Arapae, and that flows past Napinapi, Mangawhaanga, Mapiu, Mangakatote, Wairere, Aria, Totoro, and so on to the Mokau river-mouth. This was the gateway for travellers and warriors when they were on the hunt for new places and food sources. Many a kopapa has been found abandoned on the Mokau riverbanks possibly left by a whanau in a hurry. There will be others who will tell you about those places later perhaps.

I would like to explain this house and its stories depicted by carvings, kowhaiwhai and weavings. "Te Koha-a-rua" is special, It is a history book, an art gallery, and a wonderful shelter for the people who call in to stay awhile. Te Koha-a-rua or the gift from Ruaputahanga is a whole story of its own. One remembers the story of Turongo and Whatihua with this woman. In her disappointment with Whatihua, Ruaputahanga came to Mokau and married Mokau a man of the same name. Their child was Kuramonehu who was just

as industrious as her mother. Because of Ruaputahanga's disappointment with Mokau, her second husband, she again left her spouse. However she did leave a legacy of food for the people who were kind to her. When Mokau followed her south, they reached a river where she asked her husband to return to care for their child, Kuramonehu. While she swam the river, Mokau played his sad lament on a *[porutu]* flute. When she landed on the other side she sent a karakia that would always provide her whanau with fish. This was checked out in the '90s when Richard Nunns came and played his porutu on the banks of the Tongaporutu river. As he played his flute, fish appeared in a whirlpool. We stood on the banks and cried as we watched the fish turning in the whirlpool. So what's in a name indeed? The story has been proven. We have also had the name Kuramonehu given to many a young girl. Each has shown the same industrious nature of their tupuna. I have known two of these young ladies and both whakapapa to Ruaputahanga, and each has that characteristic industrious nature.

There are many signs and places within this area that show the marked popularity of this place. Seven marae are known to be within the Awakinō and Mokau rivers. Within the Mokau area alone there must have been many marae on each side of the river. There are many sacred places where many a soul has been secreted or buried, before white man came and brought their new ways of farming, cultivation, religious beliefs, education and living standards. Before the white man came there was a whanau who lived up on top of Tuhingakakapo. They never came down as they were the eyes and the ears of the whanau below. They were fed by the ones below because of their special task of being lookouts. At Te Naunau on the north bank of the river mouth, a huge cemetery was created for all those who died during transit either to or from Waikato or Taranaki. As a child we respected the place, because it was covered with boxthorn, gorse and lupins. We still fished for food on the seaside as well as the riverside where we also gathered

pipi. I believe our tuupuna were kind to us, because during the war years, we never went home empty handed. Today houses are built over the graves, and Maori don't gather pipi there any more. Although their parents gathered most of the bones and took them to Hikumutu cemetery, the occasional skull or thigh bone still appears on the seashore to remind us of former times. I believe that there is still a very recent grave there dug in the early sixties or late fifties, for an old kuia who walked many a mile to get her groceries from the Mokau store. Her mokopuna are still alive today. I remember her well.

About 3 kilometres up the river on the north bank is a place, called Tauwhare, where there is a grove of trees that are special. I believe John Parkes has written well about the significance of this area. A sacred place where the dead rangatira were placed in the trees until all flesh had fallen off the bones. When this happened the bones were collected, cleaned and put into a waka koiwi to secrete in caves in the banks of places they could find. There are many of these caves along the bluffs on the northern seashore. Many of these are now fallen in or else closed off with bushes and rock falls. Opposite this place is a stream that has its source well under the hills that look down on the Mokau. This stream comes from a cave that used to be a highway for those who traveled from Ohura or Taumarunui. The cave that the stream appears from is quite long and takes one to Ohura within a half a day's walk. Therefore here again Maori found a way of getting from place to place without too much hassle. There was much to-ing and fro-ing that brought people together for bargaining and trading purposes. The inland people sought the seafood, while the seaside folks needed some preserved birds that were prolific inland, especially in the Hurakia district.

Later when the white man came with missionaries, farmers, land agents and the like, more land was opened up. Mokau, was a very busy port at one stage, with coal, butter, flour timber and grain being exported

overseas. I believe Te Rerenga Wetere who stands here to challenge any passerby had a couple of ships to his name. But I will leave his story to be told by his mokopuna. He was a well known man who was shrewd and smart enough to help his people find skilled jobs that benefited whanau and hapu.

I think a comment I would like to make is about the Pepeha, "*Mokau ki runga, Tamaki ki raro, Mangatoatoa ki waenganui.*" This came about during an incident when Rungaterangi, Te Kawairirangi's son was killed in battle at Nga Tai Pari Rua, just south of the Mokau. Apparently he was beheaded and his body was thrown out to sea. When his body came up the Te Naunau seashore they recognized him by his unusual torso. While the men went off to get some wooden stakes to bring him in, he floated away again. His body did this a couple more times at Waikawau, and at Nukuhakari, before they caught him at Harihari. In the meantime his father had died in a battle in Tamaki at Maungawhau. In this way the two of them designated the area as belonging to Tainui with Mangatoatoa as one of the important places in Waikato at the time. Since then of course we have had that pepeha extended to include Hauraki and Raukawa with Te Kaokaoroa o Patetere.

So what's in a name? Yes we have history, we have very important events, stories and from these are waiata that indicate the true tales of old. So why do we not have many Maori here in Mokau today? Many painful stories are here and we are still grieving for that which we had. Even if we do have the return of our land and resources, will we have the same energy and fight that we once had to forge ahead. People are looking for home now, and the time is ripe for growth and development. I believe implicitly that once people have a purpose and they realize who they are and what potential there is, there will be a renaissance, a new beginning with their own ways of going ahead as a whanau, a hapu, and an iwi.