

TE KARAKA



6AM - 10AM WEEKDAYS

TE ATATŪ WITH TUMEHE

Tumehe Rongonui, the new host of Te Atatū, brings a wealth of broadcast experience and a vibrant personality to the show. His deep understanding of Māori culture, engaging storytelling, unique ability to connect with people from all walks of life and his passion for music, hauora & fitness ensure you are always informed and entertained.



10AM - 3PM WEEKDAYS

TE KOHA WITH LEANNA

Leanna Tarawa-Cooper lights up the airwaves with her vibrant energy and passion for music and hauora. Her engaging personality and genuine connection with people will brighten your day and keep you feeling uplifted. Whakaroko mai ki tēnei hōtaka a Te Koha.



3PM - 7PM WEEKDAYS

TE IHI WITH POU

Waipounamu Te Karu is no stranger to Māori Broadcasting, she covers a wide range of topics including mana wahine, hauora, mental health, well-being and she will bring the IHI every weekday!



tahu^{FM}



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8 NATIONAL HAUTAPU CEREMONY AT HOME THIS MATARIKI

This Matariki Hautapu ceremony was, for the first time, hosted by Kāi Tahu in Te Waipounamu. Photographer Richie Mills shares beautiful moments captured during the celebration in Wānaka this June.

12 WHAT DREAMS ARE MADE OF Twenty-two-year-old Taiko Torepe-Ormsby (Ngāi Tahu, Waikato, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga) has qualified to represent New Zealand as a swimmer in the 2024 Paris Olympic team. Jody O'Callaghan speaks to Taiko about how whānau and whakapapa helped to enable his achievements.

16 DRIVING EQUITABLE HEALTH OUTCOMES Te Tauraki is one of 15 Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards (IMPBs) throughout Aotearoa, which aim to challenge the healthcare system to achieve better health outcomes for Māori. Mandated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Te Tauraki offers iwi the ability to hold the government to account in its role as a treaty partner.

20 REIMAGINING PIOPIOTAHĪ The Milford Opportunities Project team presented their Master Plan for protecting Piopiotahi to the Government in June. This plan embraces Kāi Tahu culture and identity while addressing challenges posed by an increase in visitors to the area.



26 A PASSION FOR PLANNING TE KARAKA spoke to Tanya Stevens about her passion for her mahi as a Senior Policy Advisor in Te Whakaari/Strategy and Influence Team at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

30 RESPECTING AORAKI: A TĪPUNA MAUKA Toni Torepe spoke with TE KARAKA about her mahi in harnessing the power of pūrākau and whakapapa to improve the attitudes and behaviors of visitors to the ancestral mountain, Aoraki.



NGĀ HAU
E WHĀ
FROM THE
EDITOR

MĀNAWATIA A MATARIKI!

It was with an enormous sense of pride that I, like many others, watched live coverage of the Hautapu ceremony on top of Treble Cone to celebrate Matariki.

The event provided a moment to reflect on our incredible language revitalisation journey since the inception of Kotahi Mano Kāika (KMK) almost 25 years ago. To see the next generation standing with such confidence was really special – the future is in good hands!

Amid the current challenging political landscape, it's been very reassuring to watch the growing number of New Zealanders leaning into Matariki and valuing its true significance – beyond just being a day off. We are delighted to be able to share a collection of photos from the Hautapu with our readers (see page 8).

Our cover story, What dreams are made of (page 12), features Taiko Torepe-Ormsby who recently qualified for the Olympic Swimming team. Taiko's story is one of dreams and aspirations of a different kind, but like those who have brought KMK to life, it's one of tenacity, determination and focus on the end goal. We will be watching Taiko at the Games with great interest later this month.

There is nowhere in the world more breathtakingly beautiful than Piopiotahi and, as a result, it's a much coveted tourist destination. Given its rich whakapapa and history for Ngāi Tahu there is an irony in the iwi only recently gaining agency to make decisions for the region. The Milford Opportunities Project re-imagines the future through a new masterplan that fully embraces the significance of Ngāi Tahu culture and identity (see page 20).

And finally, I would like to welcome new TE KARAKA editorial assistant Sascha Wall (Ngāi Tahu – Awarua). Young, creative and with a huge heart for whānau along with a love of art, Sascha is a perfect addition to our team. Check out HE TAKATA for a brief glimpse of her life and loves.

Nāhaku noa, nā

Nā ADRIENNE ANDERSON WAAKA

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- 34 IN THE SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE** The third annual True West Adventure Race will be held in Te Tai Poutini next summer. Following on from last year's race in Hokitika, South Westland offers an adventure-packed, thrilling course to competitors from across the motu.



- 38 RISING RAKATAHI: MYA KAIRAU ON TAKING THE WORLD STAGE** TE KARAKA Spoke to Murihiku high-achiever Mya Kairau about the many impressive and eclectic achievements she has so far collected on her journey to becoming Prime Minister one day.

- 40 ONCE ABUNDANT NOW ENDANGERED** Mohua, a brightly colored yellowhead songbird, is one of 54 birds listed as a taonga species in the Ngāi Tahu Claims act (1989) and is now at risk of becoming endangered.



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TE KARAKA



**INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
TE RŪNANGA O NGĀI TAHU
BEN BATEMAN**

AN INTERGENERATIONAL MINDSET

Tēnā koutou katoa,

Ko Ben Bateman tōku ikoa. No Te Tai Poutini au. Nō te whānau Mason rāua ko Parker.

When I was growing up on Te Tai Poutini, my whānau and the whenua meant everything. Our connection to each other, our sense of place, and the mahika kai practices of our Taua and Pōua shaped our identity. As tamariki, we felt the presence of Poutini and Waitaiki whenever we spent time at the Arahura and on the rugged Coast beaches. The magic of the West Coast never leaves you.

When I first left the Coast to attend university, I knew our Kāi Tahu identity was strong amongst our whānau, but you had to look hard for the iwi imprint within the wider community. Jump ahead a few years returning home to Te Waipounamu, my biggest reflection was how far Kāi Tahu has come. Our presence cuts deeply across our takiwā and within our regional communities. Our mātauraka and leadership is sought after and valued. The home fires are burning brighter than ever, and the future is brighter still.

After our pōtiki arrived, it became important to ensure my own children had the chance to build a strong sense of themselves and their identity as Kāi Tahu - to be around whānau, build connections, and have a sense of place.

It's a privilege to currently be the Interim Chief Executive Officer of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, following the significant legacy of Arihia Bennett. My principal focus is on leading the Office as we support the development and execution of our next intergenerational tribal vision, Mō Kā Uri: Ngāi Tahu 2050. Over 30,000 ideas have been captured from engagement with whānau over the last couple of years from across our iwi generations. It is this whakaaro that's the heart of our collective iwi vision. I look forward to being able to share the vision with whānau once approved by Te Rūnanga.

Our identity remains strong - our whakapapa, the stories and traditions of our tipuna, and our sense of place and connection to our whenua. However, in this current environment where many of our whānau are struggling just to stay afloat, it has never been more important for us as an iwi to move beyond short-term agendas, and double down on our intergenerational commitments.

The actions we take today will impact the lives of our future generations. This must be top of mind in every decision we make to ensure we are empowering our whānau, supporting Papatipu Rūnaka mana motuhake, and as an iwi we are resilient, sustainable and asserting our rakatiratata.

The timeless beauty and simplicity of our tribal whakataukī provides our purpose - Mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei - For us and our children after us. We never end. With such purpose, we will succeed.

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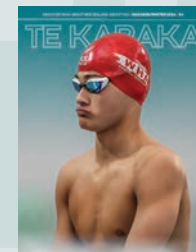
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FRONT COVER

Taiko Torepe-Ormsby competing at the 2017 New Zealand Age Group Swimming Championships, Wellington.

PHOTOGRAPH: BW MEDIA

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WHENUA

TE AHU PĀTIKI is the highest point on Horomaka/Te Pātaka-a-Rākaihautū (Banks Peninsula) overlooking Pūrau Bay and Te Wharau (Charteris Bay). Known today as Mount Herbert, Te Ahu Pātiki was a passenger on the Āraiteuru waka that capsized near Matakaea (Shag Point) on the Otago coastline. After the capsizing, many of the passengers went upon shore to explore the land, including Te Ahu Pātiki. The passengers needed to be back at the waka before daylight. However, most did not make it back, and instead turned into many of the well-known geographical features of Te Waipounamu.

2018-0311, TE RŪNANGA O NGĀI TAHU COLLECTION, NGĀI TAHU ARCHIVE / PHOTOGRAPH: TONY BRIDGE



Ngāi Tahu
Kā Huru Mānū

www.kahurumanu.co.nz



KA HAO TE RAKATAHI

Nā RANGIMĀRIE ELVIN



He kairākau kē

Whetewhete mai ōu reo

Kia ketekete mai anō, tīoriori mai anō

Kua tomo te rua kōrero

Tūpapahū ki te whenua

tau ana, tau ana.

Although following a great trauma that reverberated throughout the motu, the power of kōrero completely reshaped what law looked like in Aotearoa. Before, during and after the coming of Te Ao Mārama, the many forms of te reo Māori begat a whakapapa, like tides in motion, where our tūpuna reconceptualised celestial knowledge into ancestral knowledge, ki uta ki tai, for us to navigate the challenges we would face in the coming of other worlds.

Riding an undertow of colonisation, there is a waka tauā uninvited, breaching the shores of our Māori-ness and eroding away pre-ordained rights of He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We are having the same conversations of lore vs law, where lore is not recognised as tuakana, and law pushes the boundaries and tapu of the Māori body – a body made of whenua and wai.

A tūpuna singing from their puku, firmly and eloquently, like the familiar taki of the pikarikari – he arero taiaha. An uri with pen to paper – hei tuhi kōrae mōku.

While they used their kupu as mere pounamu to decapitate the ūpoko of a ngārara, while they used their tā as their whakapono, imbedding moko into print forever, I can't help but notice my choice of weapon today. I heard it once in a series of tautohetohe – 'whakahokia te reo mai i te mata o te pene ki te mata o te arero' nā Tākuta Te Wharehuia Milroy – where the veil of angiangi was lifted from my eyes and the wero laid at our feet, 'kua mau koe i te taiaha o te Pākehā.'

I AM NOT A KAIRĀKAU BUT THE TAKAHĪ IN THE MANA OF EACH KUPU, I HOPE, WILL LEAVE TAPUWAE FOR THEM TO NAVIGATE THE DROPLETS OF KŌKŌWAI ARRANGED INTO KĀHUI WHETŪ AND SMUDGES OF TE IKAROA STRETCHING ACROSS THIS TĀTAI WHAKAPAPA. ARMED WITH PATUI AND SHROUDED WITH THE KOROWAI OF MY WHĀNAU, KA TŪ AU.

I wonder how I can utilise this nimble taiaha to battle my way through hundreds of years to make an impact on some of the same issues that led my tūpuna to land loss, language loss, he mate Pākehā. Would the pressure of my ancestors' grip snap pencil lead? Would the ink run dry as I scramble to take down the ramblings they whisper in my ear? Why would they listen to me if they didn't listen to a taiaha-wielding, kākahu-wearing seven-foot ancient Māori rangatira?

So, I decide to reimagine this taiaha into a patui, a toki, an uhi that I can use to weave and carve my story, our story, on paper. Unfurling that kahu huruhuru worn by my koroua, carefully threading in each rau. Each collected fragment from the carved pahoreroa laid at the kuaha of the pā tōtara so that my kupu can feed my uri should they be called to action.

I am not a kairākau but the takahi in the mana of each kupu, I hope, will leave tapuwae for them to navigate the droplets of kōkōwai arranged into kāhui whetū and smudges of Te Ikaroa stretching across this tātai whakapapa. Armed with patui and shrouded with the korowai of my whānau, ka tū au.

Sitting in a moment in between these tides again, remembering the moment I saw my koko's signature for the first time in Waitangi Tribunal claims, acknowledging my tūpuna who fought for their whakapapa in the Native Land Court, in a turbulent rip of the changing tides of left to right, right to left, in writing, I promise my Māori body and Māori soul to that celestial, ancestral, terrestrial whakapapa.

In the power of kotahitanga, the many forms of te reo Māori resound as they did when our ātua sung life into being, when they wove the constellations, and when they begat light with karakia and māramatanga.

I realise I am well prepared for every te ao Hurihuri. Toitū Te Tiriti! 🇳🇿

Rangimārie Elvin (Kāti Huirapa ki Puketeraki, Ngāi Te Rangi, Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāti Pūkenga), born and raised in Tauranga Moana, prompted by a call from her tāua, is the first since five or so generations of her whānau to reside in the takiwā of her tūpuna. Delving into the "Tahu Mindset" she has been told about, she now works at Tokona te Raki, with a passion for serving her people and dreaming of thriving futures for Māori.

HE WHAKAARO

Nā ĀWHINA McGLINCHEY



Collectivising for a cause

Growing up, the walls of my childhood wharepaku were covered with leaflets, two of which I have always remembered. “If it is safe, dump it in Tokyo, test it in Paris, and store it in Washington, but keep our Pacific nuclear-free” and the other, in bold letters, *Honour the Treaty*.

Looking at these it's easy to see the difference in the two movements. The first shows the pride of a small nation that made a stand against large powerful nations. The second has been a long game where about 33 years later *Honour the Treaty* has been replaced with *Toitu te Tiriti*, and can be heard across the motu as we are becoming consumed with the effects of a political snapback.

People are collectivising in response to a common enemy and activating. I note with a sense of pride that the call for justice is now in te reo and is understood not just by Māori but by Tangata Tiriti. This has been achieved through marches, petitions, establishment of kōhanga, kura and wānanga, te reo Māori claim brought before the Waitangi Tribunal, iwi radio stations and Māori TV, whānau reclaiming and using their reo. The list goes on.

Actions and actors united with the common goal of protecting and championing our reo to enable this change. Social movements are often perceived as only protests. If that were true for te reo, I imagine we would still need to whakapākehā the call to action.

Social justice movements do not spring from nowhere. They are founded in a desire for fair distribution of wealth, opportunities and privileges among people within a society – a mechanism for driving change where inequity and unfairness exist.

Social movements have been behind some of the most powerful changes around the world from voting rights to political upheavals and the fight for racial equality. When done well they offer a powerful perspective that can change mindsets, enact laws and shift policies. A compelling movement offers individuals multiple ways of contributing, whether it be through sharing the narratives that change social

norms, signing petitions, participating in marches, or organisations advocating for shifts in policies and legislation.

The visibility of many social movements is cyclical: there are those times when they need to be heard loud and proud in the public arena to keep messages front and centre. There are other times, in some cases intergenerational, where successful movements continue to work quietly to change the dominant mindsets and systems by holding space, advancing when the winds of change are in their favour, and being ready to hold the line when what they have achieved is threatened.

An immense sense of pride for me in this current political context is witnessing a cohort of rakatahi who as first language speakers are able to articulate and activate in response to threats to the te reo movement. Youth has always been synonymous with social activism and social movements across generations, and our rakatahi are no different. It excites me to see our young people participating in not just the te reo movement but across the spectrum of social movements.

Much of this current generation is fuelled by frustration. They are not motivated by what they will gain from keeping the status quo, rather by what will be lost in the world they inherit. They feel they have no choice and will be living with the consequence of previous generation inaction. This is most evident in the space of climate change.

But what else is behind this generation's frustration? *Te Tai Waiora 2022*, a Treasury report, states that our younger generation is faring worse in three key areas: mental health, educational achievement, and housing quality. This is not a uniquely Aotearoa issue; it's prevalent across many developed democracies where the economic exclusion of young people and lower odds of owning a house than any generation before is building discontent and a lack of trust in democratic politics.


The world that today's rakatahi is inhabiting is very different from the one I experienced at a similar age. My tamariki don't have a leaflet-lined wharepaku to

expose them to social movements because access to technology and social media mean they are consuming content on social issues and events almost constantly.

I wonder, however, is rakatahi engagement in social media making any meaningful change? On one hand social media has made us lazy and makes us believe that by clicking “like” and “share” buttons we are making change. On the other hand, social media is a wonderful tool for building awareness of issues and encouraging rakatahi to participate in movements they are passionate about – after all, social media makes participation accessible to the masses.

Global data from public relations and research firm Edalman shows that Gen Z is the generation most likely to boycott a product, company, country, or state because of a political, social, or environmental stance. This also extends to how they pick employers with just one in five indicating they would work for a company that fails to share their values.

Some would say this is a bunch of idealistic youth naïve about the realities of adult life. However, an alternative view which I prefer is that they are a bunch of future change makers committed to making the world a better place and will spend their lives continuing to participate in social justice movements to ensure it.

I guess this once idealistic rakatahi, now slightly older idealistic pakeke, thinks there is a lot to be learned from how social movements have created lasting change in the past to support how we might advance the future we want, including the power of our rakatahi to create change. 

Āwhina McGlinchey (Kāti Hateatea) is raising her two tamariki in Ōtautahi while maintaining a strong connection to their pā at Moeraki. She is the Managing Director of Tokona Te Raki where she is co lead of *Mō Kā Uri – Ngāi Tahu 2050*, a project designing the collective iwi vision for the next 25 years informed by our whānau voice.




Above, L-r: Paulette Tamati-Elliffe, Kare Tipa, Ripeka Pōtiki and Manuhaea Mamaru-O'Regan. Left: TVNZ presenters Stacey Morrison and Matai Smith. Right: Kāi Tahu whānau and invited guests gather for hautapu ceremony. PHOTOGRAPHS: RICHIE MILLS

National Hautapu Ceremony at home this Matariki

For Māori, stars have always served as vital indicators in our natural world, signalling the conclusion of seasons and cycles and heralding transitions into new phases. The appearance of Te Iwa o Matariki and Puaka in the sky marks the start of the Māori new year.

When Matariki emerges on the eastern horizon in the morning, a ceremony takes place known as Whāngai i te Hautapu (or simply Hautapu). Hautapu involves preparing kai as an offering of nourishment to the stars that guide us through the year. The ceremony also encompasses acknowledging whānau who have passed and celebrating whānau who are with us.

Aotearoa's official Matariki programme began with a Hautapu hosted for the first time by Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou and Kāi Tahu in Te Waipounamu. Over 200 attendees assembled atop Treble Cone in Wānaka for the early morning ceremony, including Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, ministers Paul Goldsmith, Nicola Willis and Shane Reti, alongside Green Party co-leader Marama Davidson and respected Māori astronomer and scholar, Professor Rangi Mātāmua.

Ngāi Tahu kaimahi and talented creative, Richie Mills, was the official photographer of the Wānaka Hautapu and captured beautiful moments during the ceremony. 





Above: Ōtākou Ruahine – Rena Tamati and Julz Asher.
Above right: Upoko Edward Ellison, Thomas Aerepo-Morgan, Kare Tipa.
Below: Kairuruku, L to R: Taikawa Tamati-Elliffe, Edward Ellison,
Paulette Tamati-Elliffe, Kare Tipa, Ripeka Pōtiki,
Manuhaea Mamaru-O'Regan; Kiringaua Cassidy in front.





Above: Tumai Cassidy, Te Atarau Cassidy,
Thomas Aerepo-Morgan.
Left: Paulette Tamati-Elliffe.

What dreams are made of

NĀ JODY O'CALLAGHAN

TEN-YEAR-OLD TAIKO TOREPE-ORMSBY HAD A COUPLE OF ROLE MODELS.

One was American Michael Phelps “the greatest Olympian of all time”, who he watched from afar. The other, Matthew Hutchins, he admired poolside at his own Wharenui Swim Club, before he went on to compete in the 2016 Rio Olympics.

“I remember wanting to be him and do what he was doing,” he says ... and so he did.

Twenty-year-old Taiko (Ngāi Tahu, Waikato, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga) from Christchurch has qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympic team after breaking the fastest national record in 50-metre freestyle at the national championships in April.

He has done this while on a four-year swimming scholarship at the University of Wisconsin-Madison – which his childhood idol Hutchins also completed. “It’s easy to say I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for him.”

It also isn’t lost that he may also have young rakatahi looking up to him, and he wants to be a role model, especially as a Māori in the limelight. “Being Māori means everything to me. I love that about me.”

But he’s often asked – while living in the US – if he is Spanish or Mexican. “I just want people to know, especially rangatahi back in New Zealand. [I want] them seeing the achievements I have made, telling them that they can do it. For Māori kids [swimming] isn’t exactly a common sport, but Māori have been around the water their whole lives.”

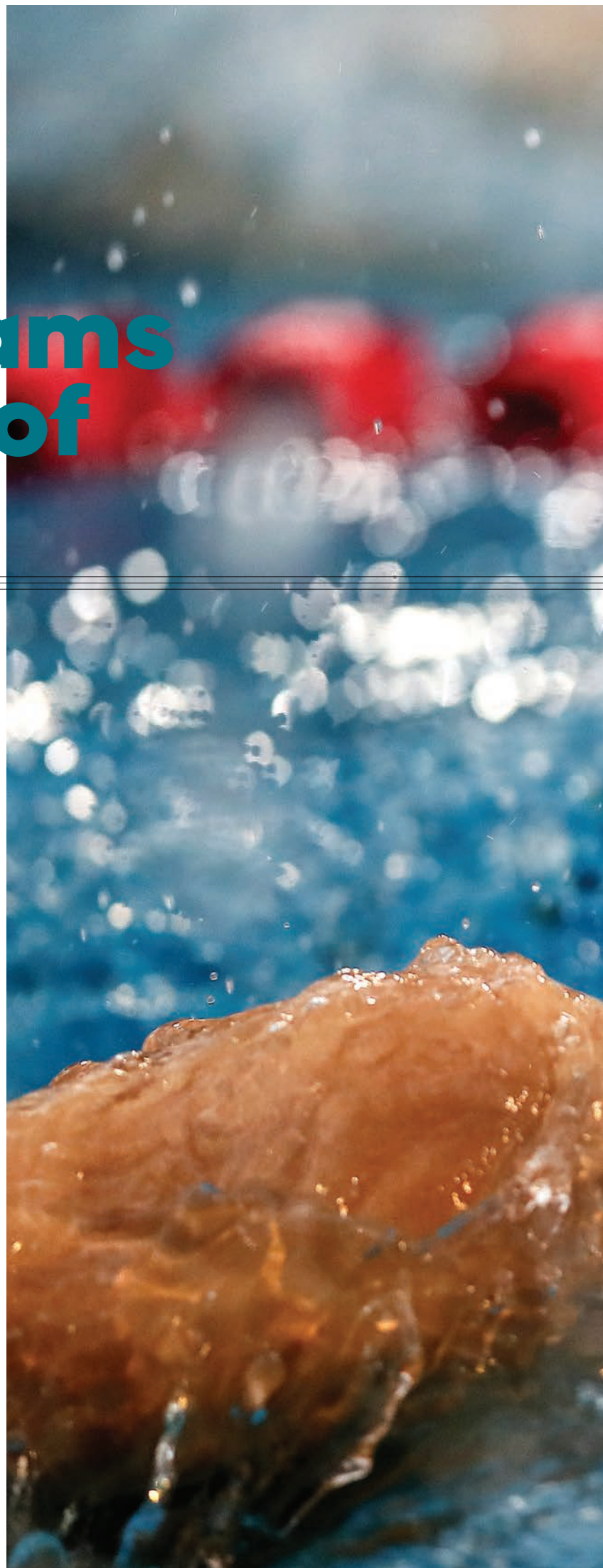
Driving him every day is the thought, “Let’s do something no Māori has ever done before”.

The first thing he sees when he wakes each day is his pounamu on his desk, “reminding myself that I’m Māori, right back to the people who have given them to me.”

He thinks of all his grandparents, extended whānau, and kaumātua at Rehua Marae where he worked during school and before moving to America – all pushing him to do better. “Knowing where I’m from, that’s who I am and nothing will ever change that.”

His mum, Toni Torepe, says living only two hours away in Christchurch allowed her and her children to maintain a close relationship with their Arowhenua pā, hapū and whānau.

“I feel privileged that not only myself but our children are connected to our pā and I don’t lose sight of the fact that many of our wider whānau and Māori in general are dislocated and don’t have the same connections that our whānau have to our pā.







"Culture, language, and identity are inextricably linked, so I'm thankful that our children know who they are and where they are from." Their whānau values are "embedded in who we are and what we do daily, like manaaki and whanaungatanga", irrespective of where in the world they are.

Being in the US has increased her son's sense of culture and identity, she says. He now wants to get moko done on his arm, "when the time's right".

Taiko, who attended St Albans School, Cathedral Grammar and St Andrew's College, says he values the long weekends he and his whānau spent on the pā growing up.

When the first Christchurch earthquake struck he remembers waking to see the fish tank he got for his eighth birthday lying on the ground. He and his sisters were sent away from the broken city to stay on the pā, attending the marae every day. "It's pretty challenging to be away from home [now] but thankfully knowing I have them behind me and pushing me, it's amazing."

So what led him to competitive swimming?

"My parents thought it was a good idea to chuck me into the pool from a young age."

He soon joined his older sisters in competitions for Wharenui at the age of seven. "As the years went on I realised Wharenui was a big part of me. I'm always going to represent Wharenui, not only nationally but internationally. I love the place man, it's cool."

His mum says enrolling her children in swimming lessons when they were young was important. After all, the country is surrounded by water. Her son has always had an intrinsic drive, being "incredibly competitive from an early age", which saw him break national records in his teens.

Taiko also had a passion for aviation as a teen. One summer they visited the airport regularly to watch an Emirates A380 plane. The memory is an example of her son's competitiveness and drive, and how what seemed like a protracted bet ended up snowballing.

"He asked me one day, 'Māmā, if I get a New Zealand record would you shout me a trip on the A380?' I said, 'yes of course son'. He then said: 'If I get two, will you upgrade me to first class?' It got closer and closer and he broke the first record."

That conversation was in January, and he broke both before his birthday in August. But a promise is a promise, and she bought him tickets on the admired jet to watch the Bledisloe Cup in Australia.

"CULTURE, LANGUAGE, AND IDENTITY ARE INEXTRICABLY LINKED, SO I'M THANKFUL THAT OUR CHILDREN KNOW WHO THEY ARE AND WHERE THEY ARE FROM." THEIR WHĀNAU VALUES ARE "EMBEDDED IN WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO DAILY, LIKE MANAAKI AND WHANAUNGATANGA", IRRESPECTIVE OF WHERE IN THE WORLD THEY ARE.

BEING IN THE US HAS INCREASED HER SON'S SENSE OF CULTURE AND IDENTITY, SHE SAYS. HE NOW WANTS TO GET MOKO DONE ON HIS ARM, "WHEN THE TIME'S RIGHT".

TONI TOREPE

"He subsequently tried to make additional bets and I said 'no'. I learned my lesson the first time."

But memories fade, and once in America he said, "If I make the Olympics will you buy me a TV?"

"I said, of course son."

Sure enough, after selection he has a television picked out on Amazon and expects his mum to fulfill her promise. "That's it now, no more," she laughs.

Her son loves winning and travelling, and swimming is a great vehicle to achieve both.

He was recruited by the University of Wisconsin-Madison during the height of COVID after being approached by selectors at the New Zealand age group championships. He started in 2022 on a four-year swimming scholarship, and has just completed his second year of a Bachelor of Science in consumer and marketplace behaviour.

His secondary school teachers would probably agree he wasn't the keenest student, he says, but he found something he was interested in. At the time we spoke, he was writing an essay about Matariki becoming a public holiday in Aotearoa.



Above: 2024 Big Ten Men's Swimming and Diving Championships, Columbus, Ohio. Top left: Whānau Christmas in New York 2022.

PHOTOGRAPHS: SUPPLIED.

Previous page: 2017 New Zealand Short Course Swimming Championships, Auckland.

PHOTOGRAPH: KIM BERQUIST PHOTOGRAPHY.

The integration of te ao Māori into society is something he wishes would happen more with indigenous cultures abroad, like in America, where indigenous people and their way of life are often disregarded. This has come up a few times in his studies. But the opportunities he has there, not only athletically, but academically and travel-wise, are “amazing”. He has been across America, and is having as much fun as possible.

“Something my Dad always told me was to balance school, social life and swimming life.”

It’s definitely paying off. The challenge of getting out of bed on those freezing minus 20 degree mornings to get in the pool are worth it too. Toni says, swimming aside, she is proud of the young man her son has become.

Just like the whakataukī ‘Kāore te kumara e kōrero ana mo tōna ake reka’, he has always been grounded and humble. His secondary school teachers would ask how he went in his competitions and he would just say, “fine thank you”, even after breaking yet another national record, his mum says.

When Taiko moved to the US and dorms in August 2022, he caught a virus from a roommate that put him in hospital for a week. It was a mix of pneumonia and taking so much paracetamol that resulted in him suffering intestinal bleeding and liver damage.



“I was out until January recovering,” he recalls. His mum remembers being flown over to be by his bedside. “I see this as a great opportunity for others to see that there’s options and he’s just a normal kid who has had his ups and downs, but has still been able to achieve what he has, even after having months off swimming,” she says.

He only returned to competing in March last year. “I guess that’s why the Olympics wasn’t necessarily on my radar given his rough start.”

She burst into tears when she saw his qualifying time, after being so nervous in the stand she had to walk down and pace poolside.

His jubilant reaction to breaking the new record was indicative of his journey to get there. “I had thought and dreamed about that moment for the past 12 months ... every night I would go to sleep imagining what it would be like to touch the finish, look up and be under the qualifying time,”

he says. “Words can’t explain the feeling.”

His time of 21.86 seconds (the Olympic qualifying time is 21.96) broke his own record of 22.11, which he equalled in July last year.

No swimmers at the Australian championships swam the 50m freestyle under 22 seconds. But the magnitude of the achievement didn’t sink in until he arrived back at university and was officially invited to join the New Zealand Olympic team.

Now, with class finally over for the year, he is getting excited about Paris in August, and being able to focus on getting faster. He will spend his days swimming in the \$80 million university pool until the start of July, when he will come home to spend a few days with whānau before meeting the team in Paris.



Above: Taiko showcasing his medals and meet trophy from the 2024 Big Ten Men’s Swimming & Diving Championships, Columbus, Ohio. Left: Taiko competing for the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

PHOTOGRAPHS: SUPPLIED.


... FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF YOUNG, DRIVEN MĀORI WHO MIGHT DRAW INSPIRATION FROM HIM, ITAIKOI SAYS: “I WOULD TELL THEM TO STAY WHO THEY ARE. DON’T TURN YOUR BACK ON MĀORI, THE CULTURE, THE PEOPLE.”

“IT’S WHO THEY ARE AND THEY SHOULD EMBRACE THAT, SHOW THE WORLD, WHETHER THAT’S THROUGH SPORTING OR ACADEMIA. SHOW EVERYONE WHO THEY ARE FOR THE BETTER.”

His mum and dad, David Ormsby, will be there to watch, while his two sisters will cheer from home.

He feels his future is very bright, and has his eyes on the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, and possibly 2032. But his focus for now is Paris.

Taiko knows there will be many eyes on his performance there, but for the next generation of young, driven Māori who might draw inspiration from him, he says: “I would tell them to stay who they are. Don’t turn your back on Māori, the culture, the people.

“It’s who they are and they should embrace that, show the world, whether that’s through sporting or academia. Show everyone who they are for the better.” 

Driving Equitable Health Outcomes

After the passing of the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act in 2022, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu mobilised to establish Te Tauraki, the entity that is spearheading hauora within the Ngāi Tahu takiwā. Te Tauraki is one of 15 Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards (IMPBs) throughout Aotearoa, and its role is to drive current reform of the health system to achieve more equitable outcomes for Māori. Kaitiaki **ANNA BRANKIN** talks to some of the people behind Te Tauraki.



MOST MĀORI WILL HAVE FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE OF THE CHALLENGES within the current health system. There are the practical barriers: finding an available appointment, taking time away from work and whānau to attend, not to mention the increasing costs.

Then there are the systemic barriers: culturally unsafe experiences with healthcare staff and failure to be provided with best practice treatment options. All of this means that often whānau don't prioritise seeking medical attention until they're really unwell, and the result is that Māori have poorer health outcomes and a shorter life expectancy than any other demographic in Aotearoa.

This is a widely-known and longstanding issue. Iwi and Māori health researchers have been advocating for change for decades, and there have been amazing initiatives that go some way to addressing the problem. Ultimately, it's clear the only solution is a complete overhaul of the way that Aotearoa delivers health services, and Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act offers the opportunity to do just that.

The establishment of Iwi-Māori Partnership Boards has enabled iwi throughout the country to take a more active role in determining how Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand will operate within their takiwā. And, as Te Tauraki Chair Rākihia Tau (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāi Tuāhuriri) says,

it gives iwi the ability to hold the government to account in its role as treaty partner.

"We have a big opportunity to change the system, to achieve rangatiratanga for our people and, above all, the equity we were always entitled to," Rākihia says. "Even our name, Te Tauraki, is derived from Te Kerēme and speaks to the importance of our work."

Rākihia says there are several meanings behind the word "tauraki": something that is incomplete; a guarantee or a promise; to grieve for. The name Te Tauraki traces today's health inequities back to their origins - promises made and broken by the Crown over 150 years ago.

In the mid-19th century the Crown committed to establishing schools and hospitals for Ngāi Tahu as part payment for tribal land. Although the land blocks changed hands, the promised schools and hospitals were never built. Today, Te Tauraki is tasked with holding the Crown to account

“WE HAVE A BIG OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE THE SYSTEM, TO ACHIEVE RANGATIRATANGA FOR OUR PEOPLE AND, ABOVE ALL, THE EQUITY WE WERE ALWAYS ENTITLED TO. EVEN OUR NAME, TE TAURAKI, IS DERIVED FROM TE KERĒME AND SPEAKS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR WORK.”

RAKIHIA TAU (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāi Tūāhuriri) Te Tauraki Chair

for these broken promises and ensuring Ngāi Tahu aspirations for health and wellbeing are finally realised.

To do this, Rākihia says it's crucial for Te Tauraki to look inwards and outwards. “On one hand our work relies on our connections within the tribe, so that's everything from having cups of tea with whānau to making sure we hold our board meetings at venues all around the island,” he says. “On the other hand, it's about external relationships, dealing with government officials, ministers and primary health care organisations and pulling levers at the systems level.”

From the outset, Te Tauraki has always been about making a difference for Māori living within the Ngāi Tahu takiwā. “We see it as our responsibility, in keeping with our values of manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga, to be working on behalf of all Māori,” Rākihia says. “Ultimately, we are all related one way or another and Te Tauraki will not be successful if we're leaving any whānau behind.”

The board of Te Tauraki brings together a depth of skill sets and experience, and Rākihia is quick to acknowledge the influence of the late Norm Dewes (Ngāti Kahungunu).

“We were very lucky to have Norm alongside us until his death earlier this year,” Rākihia says. “He was eminently capable and an incredible resource in terms of his experience and his relationships within ngā maata waka.”

Rākihia and his fellow directors hope to honour Norm's legacy by continuing the work they began together, and improving health outcomes for all Māori in the Ngāi Tahu takiwā. “And we've got the team to do it,” he says. “We've got Professor Suzanne Pitama, Professor Emma Wyeth and Dr Maira Patu, all experts in Māori health and Māori health research, and we've got Ruth Jones, an expert and advocate for tangata whaikaha, who are especially vulnerable within the current system.”

For Professor Pitama (Ngāti Kahungunu), sitting on Te Tauraki is an immense privilege and an opportunity to give back to her husband's iwi and create a better future for their tamariki.

“I've always loved the Ngāi Tahu whakataukī so much: mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei – for us and our children after us,” Suzanne says.



“It's about kaitiakitanga and it's about our mokopuna, and Te Tauraki weaves together those aspirations as well. We want to ensure that in 20 years our children are not telling the same story about inequities.”

Besides building and maintaining relationships, Te Tauraki is focused on gathering data to make sure they understand the current health landscape.

“To me, data is just another medium in our storytelling history. Māori have always shared our narratives through waiata, haka, rock carvings, whare whakairo, painting,” says Suzanne. “Data tells us its own story. It tells us how many Māori present to general practice and don't get the best practice or care. It tells us how many turn up at hospital and don't receive appropriate treatment. Every time someone goes to the doctor or the hospital, or picks up their medication from the pharmacy, we understand more of our health story.”

Suzanne uses the example of gout to demonstrate the story that data can tell. Gout is a kind of arthritis that causes pain and swelling due to a high level of uric acid in the blood, but it can be easily managed by taking medicine like allopurinol. Data tells us that Māori are more likely to experience gout, but less likely to be prescribed allopurinol when they first present with symptoms.

“SOME PEOPLE THINK DATA LACKS HUMANITY, BUT TO ME IT'S A WAY OF SCANNING THE LANDSCAPE WITHOUT DRAGGING OUT PERSONAL TRAUMA. IT SHOWS US THE LENGTHS THAT MĀORI ARE GOING TO TO ACHIEVE HAUORA AND IT GIVES US THE EVIDENCE WE NEED TO ADVOCATE FOR WHĀNAU.”

PROFESSOR SUZANNE PITAMA (Ngāti Kahungunu)



“TE TAURAKI AIMS TO FORTIFY THE RANGATIRATANGA OF Papatipu Rūnaka, as well as enhance the role of hauora Māori service providers who know their communities, who know their whānau. Te Tauraki offers an opportunity for whānau to speak into spaces where they haven't necessarily been able to influence.”

SONYA STEVENS (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu ki te Wairoa)
Te Tauraki general manager

“Some people think data lacks humanity, but to me it's a way of scanning the landscape without dragging out personal trauma. It shows us the lengths that Māori are going to to achieve hauora and it gives us the evidence we need to advocate for whānau,” Suzanne says. “Let's say we manage to change the way Māori with gout are treated. Firstly, we'd improve their quality of life and reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease. And secondly, it means the rest of their whānau is more likely to recognise the symptoms of gout, and know that there is a treatment, and to feel confident in seeking it for themselves. It changes the narrative immediately.”

By examining existing data and uncovering the stories that whānau have already shared about their experiences in the health system, Te Tauraki will be able to advocate for changes that will address the inequities Māori face. “The good thing about Te Tauraki is that we're not discovering a new approach to best practice healthcare,” Suzanne says. “We just need to look at what is working for Pākehā and say 'well I'll have that, thank you.' It's not rocket science, it's just understanding existing best practice and demanding it.”

Day to day, the work of Te Tauraki is led by general manager Sonya Stevens (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu ki te Wairoa). Rākihia says he's confident in his team and the work they're undertaking.

“I'm really proud of the team we've put together, led by Sonya. They are staunch advocates of the rights of Ngāi Tahu and they're unashamed and unapologetic when it comes to holding Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand to account, which is exactly what we need.”

With her legal background and determined drive for social justice, Sonya sees the work of Te Tauraki as the perfect fit for her.

“For so long the health system has not been a welcoming space for whānau, and I see some whānau developing this internal barrier that prevents them from seeking help, because they're used to being shut out,” she says. “That is something I absolutely want to see changed, and I want whānau to know that we are working hard to make sure that the health system delivers for them.”

Te Tauraki occupies a unique space within health reform, acting as a bridge between Te Whatu Ora, other Crown agencies and Māori communities. At times it can be a challenging path to walk as the political landscape constantly changes, but Sonya says their purpose remains clear.

“Te Tauraki aims to fortify the rangatiratanga of papatipu rūnaka, as well as enhance the role of hauora Māori service providers who know their communities, who know their whānau,” Sonya says. “Te Tauraki offers an opportunity for whānau to speak into spaces where we haven't necessarily been able to influence before.”

Even the disestablishment of Te Aka Whai Ora (Māori Health Authority) has not deterred Te Tauraki from its goal. “We take the opportunities where we find them. Te Aka Whai Ora was its own opportunity, and it is sad it came to an end on 30 June. Now we have the ability to partner directly with Te Whatu Ora and continue to make change across the broader health system,” Sonya says. “We have the mandate of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and we have legislative mandate through the Pae Ora Act. We have the ability to pull levers in the system and we're going to use them to amplify the voice of whānau Māori, and to influence for better.”

As Te Tauraki works towards the fulfilment of broken promises, Rākihia says their eyes are fixed on success. “I reflect back to the Ngāi Tahu claim and the famous words of Tā Tipene O'Regan: 'I climbed to the top of the mountain, and do you know what I saw? Valleys, and beyond them, yet more mountains to climb,'” Rākihia says. “That is how I see the work of Te Tauraki. Our guiding principle is the relentless pursuit of whānau hauora and our success will be reflected in climbing every mountain in our path to achieve it.”



Above: Members of the Te Tauraki board and operational team. L-r: Holly Weir-Tikao, Jade Lee-Walker, Anne Thomas, Rākihia Tau, Ruth Jones, Taone O'Regan, Sonya Stevens, Professor Emma Wyeth. Missing – Dr Maira Patu and Professor Suzanne Pitama.

PHOTOGRAPHS: SUPPLIED

TIKAKA HOU, ORAKA HOU

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Reimagining Piopiotahi

For many years, Kāi Tahu has been limited from safeguarding and engaging with many of our sacred sites, including Piopiotahi and the Milford Corridor. This is beginning to change, with initiatives like the Milford Opportunities Project dreaming of a new future for the region – one that embraces Kāi Tahu culture and identity while addressing challenges posed by more visitors and an ageing infrastructure. The project team reached a milestone in June, presenting their masterplan to the government. Kaituhi **ANNA BRANKIN** reports.

BURIED DEEP IN THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF TE WAIPOUNAMU IS A REGION renowned for its spectacular and dramatic landscapes: rugged cliffs, cascading waterfalls, dense native bush and pristine waters. Known to the rest of the world as Fiordland, Kāi Tahu call it Te Rua-o-te-Moko – and the jewel in its crown is Piopiotahi, or Milford Sound.

According to Kāi Tahu creation stories, the rugged terrain of Te Rua-o-te-Moko was the work of demigod and master carver Tū Te Rakiwhānoa. He travelled to Te Waipounamu in search of his tipuna Aoraki, only to discover he had been turned to stone alongside his brothers to form the highest peaks of Kā Tiritiri o te Moana – the Southern Alps.

Using his adze Te Hamo, Tū Te Rakiwhānoa carved the land to form the deep fiords, peaks and plateaus of Te Rua-o-te-Moko, providing a safe haven for the arrival of his human descendants. He began at the southern edge and perfected his technique as he moved north, considering the last fiord, Piopiotahi, to be his greatest achievement.

Kāi Tahu has maintained a connection with Te Rua-o-te-Moko for centuries, through whakapapa and place-based practices such as mahika kai and pounamu extraction. There was an extensive transport network into the region that included coastal routes and well-worn inland trails dotted with established nohoanga sites for seasonal occupation.

The region is laden with ancient names carried from Hawaiiki to

Aotearoa, demonstrating that no place was too remote for Kāi Tahu to explore and name. These names form part of our historic knowledge system; oral maps that assist current and future generations to understand Te Rua-o-te-Moko and find their place within it.

Today, eight Papatipu Rūnaka exercise mana whenua in the region: Ōraka Aparima Rūnaka; Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio; Te Awarua Rūnaka; Waihōpai Rūnaka; Hokonui Rūnanga; Te Rūnanga o Moeraki; Kāti Huirapa ki Puketeraki and Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou.

This rich history is one of many reasons Muriel Johnstone (Ngāi Tahu, Ōraka Aparima) jumped at the opportunity to sit on the board of the Milford Opportunities Project.

“My personal interest in the kaupapa was heightened knowing how treasured this place was to our collective tīpuna, through the kōrero, wāhi ingoa and pūrākau shared by my own Pōua and Taua,” she says. “My involvement formally began in 2017, although of course mana whenua had been expressing concern and frustration for some time. We could clearly see increasing stressors and problems.”

The remote environment of Te Rua-o-te-Moko is a stronghold for native flora and fauna, and it's recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage site, while its iconic beauty makes it a draw card for international tourism. Visitor numbers to Piopiotahi have more than doubled since 2012, with most tourists making the eight-hour round trip from Queenstown in a single day. The current management of recreation and tourism along the Milford Corridor and at Piopiotahi poses a threat to the very things that make this place special: its untouched beauty and unique natural environment.

Left: Rahotu (Mitre Peak) at dawn.

PHOTOGRAPH: LIZZY SUTCLIFFE



Above: Milford Opportunities Project board members Muriel Johnstone, Michael Skerrett and Arihia Bennett. PHOTOGRAPH: BLACKFEATHER STUDIOS
Right: The road into the spectacular Milford Sounds. PHOTOGRAPH: SUPPLIED

Since 2017, the Milford Opportunities Project has been exploring ways to meet this challenge by implementing a self-funded, sustainable tourism system. It's a collaboration between Kāi Tahu, the Department of Conservation, Southland District Council, the Ministry of Transport, Waka Kotahi, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and Environment Southland.

The project board includes Kāi Tahu directors Muriel Johnstone and Michael Skerrett as well as former Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu chief executive Arihia Bennett. They sit alongside directors representing local and central government as well as the tourism industry, and are tasked with ensuring Kāi Tahu rights and interests are upheld.

Michael Skerrett (Ngāi Tahu, Waihōpai) says their involvement has been a welcome opportunity to regain a foothold in this significant area. "It is a real opportunity for us to get back in place. Back in the 1960s it was virtually only our Ngāi Tahu fishermen operating out of Piopiotahi before the tourism boats crept in and they were shifted," he says.

"It's a cultural desert in there, and this project gives us the opportunity to adorn the place with our carvings and artworks and interpretations, and in doing so restore our culture and enhance the visitor experience."

In 2021, the project team put forward the Milford Opportunities Masterplan, and for the past two years has been testing its recommendations. The result of this work was recently presented to the government in the hope of a new approach. The team is in it for the long haul.

"The masterplan recommends many changes to enhance conservation and tourism over a 50-year time frame," says Muriel. "This is a forward-looking project and much will develop as time, funding and future proposals are considered."

The proposed changes are woven through with Kāi Tahu ideas and aspirations for the region, with a focus on generating revenue that can be poured back into protecting the natural environment.

"Charging international visitors is one of the main recommendations. As New Zealanders, we pay for conservation through our taxes but tourists have been getting a free ride," Michael says. "It's only fair that they pay to protect the environment they're enjoying visiting, and our researchers actually found that most visitors are willing to do so."

Other recommendations within the masterplan include controlling access with an express park-and-ride service from Te Ana-au (Te Anau) using zero emission buses, minimising congestion along the Milford Corridor. The 120 kilometre drive from Te Ana-au to Piopiotahi is one of the most scenic stretches of road in the world, yet as it stands most visitors travel along it without stopping.

Development of experiences along the corridor, as well as tourism infrastructure in Te Ana-au, will increase overnight stays and be a catalyst for growth. There are additional safety recommendations, including provisions for the Piopiotahi workforce to live elsewhere to offset the omnipresent earthquake and tsunami risk.

There are also provisions for Kāi Tahu stories to be incorporated into any new development, increasing the visibility of iwi in the region. This includes the installation of a pou whenua designed by master carvers Steve Solomon, James York and Fayne Robinson, to mark the entrance of Te Rua-o-te-Moko. The eight-metre pou whenua will tell the creation story of the area.

Within Piopiotahi itself, a waka landing will be established. "This tauraka waka will be reinstated as close to the original site as possible, allowing waka ama and cultural activities to once again have their right places in this treasured area," says Muriel.

The masterplan also advocates for the restoration of traditional place names in the region, in keeping with a national trend to embrace Māori names and the rich stories behind them.

For example, there are many accounts of the meaning behind the name Piopiotahi. One story is that Piopiotahi was the name of a waka that travelled from Hawaiki to gather pounamu, while another states

"IT IS A REAL OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO GET BACK IN PLACE. BACK IN THE 1960S IT WAS VIRTUALLY ONLY OUR NGĀI TAHU FISHERMEN OPERATING OUT OF PIOPIOTAHĪ BEFORE THE TOURISM BOATS CREPT IN AND THEY WERE SHIFTED.

"IT'S A CULTURAL DESERT IN THERE, AND THIS PROJECT GIVES US THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADORN THE PLACE WITH OUR CARVINGS AND ARTWORKS AND INTERPRETATIONS, AND IN DOING SO RESTORE OUR CULTURE AND ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE."

MICHAEL SKERRETT (Ngāi Tahu, Waihōpai)



"THIS IS HOW WE CAN BE PART OF THE SOLUTION IN GROWING CONSERVATION ALONGSIDE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES, WHILE STILL SAFEGUARDING OUR GREAT TAONGA PĪOPIOTAHĪ, THE MILFORD CORRIDOR FROM TE ĀNAU, AND THE WIDER AREA."

MURIEL JOHNSTONE (Ngāi Tahu, Ōraka Aparima)



that the famed explorer Māui travelled to the region and named the fiord after his pet bird – piopio being a now-extinct songbird.

“We’ve been encouraged to be quite bold, so we asked the question, ‘Is it Milford Sound, or is it Piopiotahi?’” says Arihia Bennett. “And we ultimately decided it is and has always been Piopiotahi, so that’s what we’re putting forward.”

Arihia joined the board at the end of 2023, a valuable addition with her experience at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and her knowledge of Piopiotahi. She has a longstanding connection to the region, spending seven years there in the 1990s, working first as a lodge manager and later as a branch manager for Fiordland Travel, now Real New Zealand.

“I’ve been really impressed with the board in terms of their openness and genuineness in hearing Ngāi Tahu views,” Arihia says. “It’s right up the front in bright lights, that any changes must align with the aspirations of the iwi and the expectations of our Deed of Settlement.”

Michael agrees, saying it has been a constructive experience from the outset – and very different from several boards and working groups he’s been part of over the years.

“It’s been an exciting and enjoyable experience, working with really good people. They buy into what we’re trying to achieve, and they understand the meaning of article two of the Treaty: that we have tino rangatiratanga, or absolute authority, over forest, fishes, settlements and other taonga.”

For the iwi it’s imperative that as a premier attraction experiencing more visitors, the approach to tourism at Piopiotahi must acknowledge Kāi Tahu tino rangatiratanga and provide opportunities for the iwi to participate in the local tourism industry.

“If this plan is enacted, we will have the opportunity for our people to find employment in our own takiwā, or even to explore business ventures with Papatipu Rūnanga and Ngāi Tahu Holdings,” says Michael. “For 26 years we’ve been waiting for certain provisions from our Deed of Settlement to be enacted, and with this plan we might be able to achieve it.”

Under Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987, the Crown must give practical effect to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. One way this can be done is by enabling iwi to reconnect to ancestral lands by taking opportunities through concessions that grant permission for a business or enterprise on conservation land.

Ngāi Tahu Holdings has expressed interest in taking over certain concessions within Piopiotahi and along the corridor, but the current system favours incumbents. The masterplan recommends changes to the concession system that would allow the iwi to participate in emerging opportunities.

“There is obviously an interest from the tribe in pursuing future

opportunities that come about not only at Piopiotahi but along the Milford Corridor through to Te Ānau,” Arihia says. “Those opportunities could be anything from whānau businesses, through to Papatipu Rūnaka enterprises, through to investments by Ngāi Tahu Holdings.”

As well as the potential financial gains, the iwi believes it has a key role to play in the tourism industry when it comes to exercising mana whenua and enhancing visitors’ experience.

“These are our ancestral lands, and out of that comes a responsibility as much as anything to embody our values of kaitiakitanga and




Above: Hineteawa (Bowen Falls) with Piopiotahi village in the background. PHOTOGRAPH: SUPPLIED

manaakitanga,” Michael says. “Many historical sources tell us that Pākehā settlers said they wouldn’t have survived here if it hadn’t been for the support of our ancestors. Today, that translates to providing a safe and enjoyable experience to visitors.”

Although the Kāi Tahu directors appreciate the support and positive feedback they’ve received from their colleagues on the Milford Opportunities Project, they say it’s important to note that Kāi Tahu is not asking for permission to exercise its tino rangatiratanga – merely for the space to do so.

“It’s acknowledged in legislation that we hold tino rangatiratanga within our tribal takiwā,” Michael says.

Tino rangatiratanga is not just about Kāi Tahu authority; it’s about kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga – stewardship and care for people and place. As Muriel says, “This is how we can be part of the solution in growing conservation alongside other opportunities, while still safeguarding our great taonga Piopiotahi, the Milford Corridor from Te Ana-au, and the wider area.” 

A passion for planning

It's not every day you meet someone who loves their career so much they're keen to recruit more people to join them, but that's how passionate Tanya Stevens is about her mahi. "Honestly, if more people knew what a planner does, they would want to do it," says the Senior Policy Advisor in Te Whakaariki/Strategy and Influence Team for Kāi Tahu.

Tanya talks to kaituhi **ILA COUCH** about the joys of having a job with a purpose and why we need more Kāi Tahu in planning roles.

IN ANOTHER LIFE, TANYA STEVENS (NGĀI TAHU) MPLANPRAC, BMUS, MNZPI, PIEMA would be a concert clarinetist. That was the dream she was pursuing while holding down a job at Auckland University and studying for a degree in music.

"I worked for the university in student information through most of my music degree," says Tanya. "I had to find out more about planning and the department head made it sound so interesting I asked if they would consider someone like me who had studied music, to study a Masters in Planning Practice."

The answer was "yes", and more than 15 years into her career as a planner Tanya couldn't be happier.

"Planning is a career that needs different people from different backgrounds to reflect the communities we live in. Iwi are affected by all areas of planning, so when you catch on to the fact that someone has made a decision about something affecting you, you realise how important it is."

Every region around the motu operates under local government councils, which require planners to create policies that promote good outcomes for communities. Planners can work on housing, freshwater and hazards management, transport, heritage protection, promoting energy efficiency, and protecting or managing effects on the environment.

Their mahi requires them to be subject experts through public engagement, research, written reports, submissions and evidence.

Tanya's first job after completing her Masters was at Auckland City Council, largely working on residential resource consents. Deciding to venture abroad, she landed a planning job in Manchester with the oldest firm of chartered surveyors in the UK, Drivers Jonas. The company merged with Deloitte, and Tanya then found herself working for the biggest finance firm in the world.

"It was a real privilege to work on a range of different schemes, mainly in urban development," says Tanya. "We worked on big projects, including securing planning permission for a new university campus (Birley Fields), a new hospital, and a 1.2 million square foot distribution centre. It was an amazing experience."

After seven years abroad Tanya decided to return home, and in 2014 she took a job within Te Rūnanga. Through her mahi she ensures mana whenua rights, interests and aspirations are represented within the planning framework. She has provided expert planning evidence to hearings panels, including the Christchurch City Council District Plan Review, proposed Marlborough Environment Plan and Aquaculture Variations, and appeared as an expert planning witness in the Environment Court and mediation.

"When I prepare evidence, I'm using my knowledge as a planning





Above: Akaroa Harbour visit with Environment Canterbury, Te Rūnanga kaimahi and Ōnuku Rūnanga. PHOTOGRAPH: SUPPLIED
 Previous page: Tanya attending Te Ohu Kaimoana Hui-ā-Tau, 2024. PHOTOGRAPH: TE OHU KAIMOANA

[TANYA] RECENTLY WORKED WITH INDIVIDUAL SUCCESSORS AND TE ARAWHITI ON LEGAL ACCESS TO THE HĀWEA/WĀNAKA (STICKY FOREST) SILNA SITE, A PREVIOUSLY LANDLOCKED BLOCK OF LAND SET ASIDE AS REPLACEMENT FOR THE ORIGINAL ALLOCATION AT “THE NECK” TO SO-CALLED “LANDLESS NATIVES” FOLLOWING THE 10 MAJOR LAND PURCHASES IN THE KĀI TAHU TAKIWĀ. NOW, 170 YEARS LATER, THE SUCCESSORS ARE WORKING TOWARDS THE TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP TO THEM.

“WE WERE ABLE TO INFLUENCE A PLAN CHANGE TO ENABLE LEGAL VEHICLE AND INFRASTRUCTURE ACCESS TO A BLOCK THAT HAD BEEN LANDLOCKED FOR YEARS. IT’S SATISFYING TO KNOW THAT WHEN IT IS EVENTUALLY TRANSFERRED THERE WILL BE AN ABILITY FOR THE SUCCESSORS TO REALISE THE BENEFITS FROM THAT BLOCK.”

TANYA STEVENS Ngāi Tahu

expert to navigate very formal legal (western) processes, and while doing so I’m drawing on the evidence or views of Papatipu Rūnaka experts to influence those processes and achieve the outcomes that Papatipu and Te Rūnanga are looking for in the environment.”

The formation of regional environmental entities has further developed resource management and planning capacity throughout Papatipu Rūnaka, including Mahaanui Kurataiao, established in 2007 by the six Papatipu Rūnaka of Te Tai o Mahaanui, Aukaha (formerly Kāi Tahu ki Otago), a mana whenua-owned consultancy delivering social, economic, environmental, and cultural services across the takiwā of five Papatipu Rūnaka shareholders, and Te Ao Marama Inc, made up of representatives of the four Murihiku Rūnaka.

There have been many career highlights with Te Rūnanga. She recently worked with individual successors and Te Arawhiti on legal access to the Hāwea/Wānaka (Sticky Forest) SILNA site, a previously landlocked block of land set aside as replacement for the original allocation at “The Neck” to so-called “landless natives” following the 10 major land purchases in the Kāi Tahu takiwā. Now, 170 years later, the successors are working towards the transfer of ownership to them.

“PLANNING IS ABOUT THE INTERACTION BETWEEN PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT ... IT’S NOT NEW FOR NGĀI TAHU.”



Above: Representatives from Aukaha, Te Ao Marama, Papatipu Rūnaka and Te Rūnanga attending the Otago RPS hearing. PHOTOGRAPH: SUPPLIED

“We were able to influence a plan change to enable legal vehicle and infrastructure access to a block that had been landlocked for years,” says Tanya. “It’s satisfying to know that when it is eventually transferred there will be an ability for the successors to realise the benefits from that block.”


While some days are more challenging than others, Tanya says Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu has a depth of history and forward focus that makes it the ultimate place to work.

“Planning is about the interaction between people and the environment,” says Tanya. “Ngāi Tahu have consciously understood and managed this interaction for generations, so while the formal profession and concept of planning was born from the Industrial Revolution, and since evolved, it’s not new for Ngāi Tahu.

“We have a lot to add to planning processes. We think about how something will affect our children’s children far beyond an election term or the life of a planning document, and this is good for the whole community.”

Anticipating a future where there will be higher competition for resources, Tanya hopes more whānau answer the call to take up roles

in resource management and planning. To support this she has been working Te Pou Here Pūreirei to find ways to support whānau into planning.

“There’s nothing like being the one who holds the pen and I want as many people as possible who are Ngāi Tahu, or Ngāi Tahu friendly, to be involved in those processes, whether it’s in a private consultancy, government, working for Te Rūnanga, or a consultancy for Papatipu Rūnanga.” 

“WE HAVE A LOT TO ADD TO PLANNING PROCESSES. WE THINK ABOUT HOW SOMETHING WILL AFFECT OUR CHILDREN’S CHILDREN FAR BEYOND AN ELECTION TERM OR THE LIFE OF A PLANNING DOCUMENT, AND THIS IS GOOD FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.”



Respecting Aoraki: a Tipuna Mauka

A kaupapa Māori research approach has brought together Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua and mountaineers to solve a very basic problem - what to do with human waste left behind on the Tōpuni of Aoraki.

Toni Torepe, research co-lead and senior lecturer at the Faculty of Education at Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury (UC), spoke to kaituhi **ILA COUCH** about the power of pūrākau and whakapapa to change the attitudes and behaviour of recreational visitors to Aoraki and how a kaupapa Māori research model could benefit kaitiaki in Aotearoa, and around the world.



“WE HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH LAND, OUR COSMOLOGY, OUR CULTURAL PRACTICES, AND OUR HISTORY ARE ALL INTERTWINED WITH THE CONCEPT OF LAND. THERE WERE CONVERSATIONS AROUND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH AORAKI AND HOW TO ADDRESS IGNORANCE, MISUNDERSTANDING, AND SOMETIMES THE UNCONSCIOUS INSULT THAT MAY BE CAUSED BY MOUNTAINEERS AND THEIR HUMAN WASTE PRACTICES ON THE MOUNTAIN, AND IN MOUNTAINOUS AREAS. THE RESEARCH SHOWED THAT WHILE THERE ARE A MYRIAD OF WAYS AROWHENUA CONNECT TO AORAKI, THOSE RELATIONSHIPS ARE REINFORCED BY PŪRĀKAU AND WHAKAPAPA.”

TONI TOREPE Ngāi Tahu, Kāti Huirapa

TONI TOREPE (NGĀI TAHU, KĀTI HUIRAPA) HAS BEEN GIVING A LOT OF interviews about her mahi lately. For the past two years she has been co-lead on a research project addressing the environmental, health, and cultural impacts of mountaineering on Aoraki, specifically around the practice of leaving solid waste on the mountain.

The New Zealand Alpine Club has discovered it's spending more airlifting toilet containers out of alpine huts than it's receiving in hut fees.

Using a kaupapa Māori approach to the project, Toni's research addresses the need for behavioural changes in recreational users of Aoraki, who often don't know of the mountain's cultural significance to mana whenua.

“I wouldn't leave my human waste in a cemetery on someone's ancestor. I don't think any of us would,” says Toni. “But when only eleven per cent of mountaineers we surveyed have a good understanding of tikanga and ideas of tapu, there is an opportunity through education to support behaviour change. Aoraki is central to who we are as Kāti Huirapa. Our pūrākau and whakapapa are illustrative of our relationship with him so the idea of someone leaving behind their human waste on him is problematic.”

The issue of appropriate human interaction with cultural sites of significance is not a unique problem for Indigenous peoples. In 2019, the Anangu peoples of Central Australia were successful in ending climbing on Uluru, a site they relate to as tjukurpa (the ancestral source of being). This year Japan, struggling with a surge in tourism and excessive waste, limited access to their sacred mountain, even blocking a ground view of Mount Fuji that drew hordes of photo-snapping, littering tourists.

The invitation to join the research team tackling the issue of human waste on Aoraki was extended to Toni by fellow UC researcher and co-lead, Associate Professor Chris North. As a founder of Leave No Trace, Chris established the national branch to promote responsible recreation. Leave No Trace has branches in the United States, Canada, Ireland, Japan, Australia and Aotearoa.

“Through this research project there are opportunities to make relationships with other indigenous and environmental researchers to think about collaborative work,” says Toni.

The first phase of their research began with mātauraka Arowhenua. Departing from a traditional Western framework of research, interviews were conducted by a whānau member from Arowhenua, which presented an opportunity to build research capabilities within the hapū.

“There is a long history of indigenous communities being ‘researched about’ and in the past the benefits and advantages of research have remained with the researcher or the research group. As researchers using a kaupapa Māori methodology, we want to research alongside people.”

Those initial interviews provided insights into how whānau perceived mountaineering activities and the potential sources of conflict arising from mountaineers on Aoraki.

“We have a relationship with land, our cosmology, our cultural practices, and our history are all intertwined with the concept of land,” says Toni. “There were conversations around our relationship with Aoraki and how to address ignorance, misunderstanding, and sometimes the unconscious insult that may be caused by mountaineers and their human waste practices on the mountain, and in mountainous areas. The research showed that while there are a myriad of ways Arowhenua connect to Aoraki, those relationships are reinforced by pūrākau and whakapapa.”

Four major themes emerged from the first phase of research: whakapapa and pūrākau, the idea of tikaka and tapu, desecration and utu, and hopes for a better future.

“In the fourth theme there was discussion around the research project having the ability to educate and enlighten the wider community around the ways we, Arowhenua whānau, view Aoraki,” says Toni. “While this study focuses particularly on Aoraki, there are other significant landscape features that we as Māori, or we as indigenous, are part of our pūrākau and whakapapa. That's an exciting prospect that the benefits are wide-ranging, and we have that opportunity to encourage change behaviour as one of the outcomes.”

In phase two of the project, 461 New Zealand Alpine Club members responded to an online survey by two change behaviour psychologists within the research team. In addition to enquiring about their solid waste disposal practices, mountaineers were questioned about their knowledge of mana whenua, the places they climbed, and what they knew of tikaka and cultural practices.

“We wanted to know how best to design a more effective and culturally appropriate campaign with messages to promote that behaviour change,” says Toni.

Survey results showed that 23 per cent of respondents did not have a good understanding of Māori culture in the area where they mountaineered, with another 32 per cent only having a slight understanding.

“If we want to move to a ‘Leave No Trace’ concept where everything is carried out, mountaineers need to understand the relationship we have with Aoraki as our ancestor. That might give them the motivation to make changes. We need to do some educating, and this is where mātauranga from Arowhenua becomes really important.”

In December 2023 a small rōpū from Arowhenua and a party of mountaineers came together for a side project, Ki uta ki tai. The group spent a week together, starting with a helicopter ride and a two-day stay at Plateau Hut.

“The four of us from Arowhenua had never had that climbing experience before, so obviously there was a lot of trust and relationship building,” says Toni. “The mountaineers were our tuakana up there and the gift they gave us was an insight into what they do. We had the most stunning weather and the opportunity to ascend to Glacier Dome.”



The mountaineers assumed a taina role during the trek through Te Manahuna and down to Arowhenua pā. During that time whānau shared stories of seasonal and longer-term settlements, discussed mahika kai practices, went eel spearing up the river, and gave a tour of the nursery and kōrero about future planting plans.

“The mountaineers got to see how we view Aoraki as Arowhenua - our way of seeing the landscape and the world, compared to how they see the landscape in relation to what they are doing.”

The fifth day was spent in an analysis session pulling together insights from the week.

“There was a strong sense that the mountaineers didn’t climb to conquer; they came for the enjoyment, the landscape, and their own reasons. What became evident was the mountaineers wanted to do the right thing; it’s knowing what the right thing is.”

The project is now in its third phase and with the help of a master’s student within the UC’s School of Product Design, a tangible solution is being created for mountaineers to take their waste with them.

“It needs to be a product mountaineers are going to want to use - it can’t leak or have odours, and it has to be lightweight,” says Toni.


“The goal is to do some testing before releasing the final product alongside an education programme with different stakeholders.”

To date, the team has had their research acknowledged and celebrated: The Faculty of Education Indigenous Research in Aotearoa and the Pacific Excellence Award 2023, and UC’s Highly Commended Award for advancing sustainability research for 2023. Invitations have been extended to the team to take their work to an international stage.

“We’ve been accepted to speak at an international conference in Colorado in October and are working with a global environmental researcher within some of the national parks in the United States. The more opportunities we have to discuss this kaupapa in different contexts the more momentum we bring to different ways of thinking, being, and knowing to create change.”

Taking time to reflect on her mahi, Toni says she is driven as a researcher to create positive change for the community, not just here in Aotearoa, but beyond.

“As a co-lead on this project I have the opportunity to work alongside my Arowhenua whānau. This study is incredibly important to us as a rūnanga, as a hapū, and also for the wider iwi - for Ngāi Tahu. So, while this study is focusing particularly on Aoraki, there are other significant landscape features that we as Māori, or we as indigenous people, share as part of our pūrākau and whakapapa.

“It’s exciting to have the opportunity to encourage behaviour change among mountaineers and for my whānau to know that Aoraki is being respected.” 

“THE MOUNTAINEERS GOT TO SEE HOW WE VIEW AORAKI AS AROWHENUA - OUR WAY OF SEEING THE LANDSCAPE AND THE WORLD, COMPARED TO HOW THEY SEE THE LANDSCAPE IN RELATION TO WHAT THEY ARE DOING.”

Left: Research co-lead Toni Torepe during climb to Glacier Dome, December 2023. PHOTOGRAPH: SUPPLIED; MAIN AORAKI PHOTOGRAPH: TONY FEDER/STOCK



In the spirit of adventure

The rugged, breathtaking landscape of Te Tai o Poutini will play host to a group of enthusiastic visitors next summer, set to challenge themselves physically and mentally for the third annual True West Adventure Race. Kaituhi **NIKKI-LEIGH CONDON** reports.



FOR WORLD CHAMPION ADVENTURE RACER AND CAPTAIN OF THE world's most successful adventure racing team, Nathan Fa'avae, South Westland is the natural choice for the latest leg of the race after competitors battled against the elements and each other in Hokitika last year.

"Competitors are really going to get a taste of everything with this race, and we are so excited for them to see what Haast has to offer. There is no better territory for an adventure race than what we have seen here in South Westland."

In its third year, True West is ambitious and innovative. "We are a fairly aspirational adventure racing company in that we go to totally new and unexplored areas to provide a true adventure with every leg," says Nathan. He and his company have worked closely with the Department of Conservation, local iwi, and landowners to ensure a collective effort for every race ... and the upcoming event in 2025 will be no different.

Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio Chief Executive Kara Edwards says working with Nathan has been uplifting and exciting.

"Nathan and his company have been so amazing. Last year he worked closely with us to encourage participation for our members and whānau. He made special trips over to meet Ngāi Tahu competitors and support their training efforts, helping us put together training plans

and being incredibly hands-on in terms of ensuring our people were prepared."

A total of six Ngāi Tahu teams entered the race last year, with a young family of three winning the three-hour category in their first adventure race.

"Honestly, I wasn't sure if we could even finish the race, let alone win it. It's such a surprising yet incredible achievement really," says Travis Terry after crossing the finish line in first place with his wife, Tash, and their 11-year-old son, Reece.

Nathan is a seven-time world adventure racing champion with a personal passion for encouraging Māori and Pasifika to compete in a still emerging sport.

The effort he and his team has made to encourage whānau to compete has not been lost on Kara. "Last year they were considering cancelling the three-hour event due to low numbers. However, we had a chat and I encouraged them to keep it open as I knew the longer events might be too daunting for new competitors, including our whanaunga."

The upcoming race in 2025 will feature categories from three to 48 hours, with some competitors beginning their race leg in the dark. Not for the faint-hearted, disciplines include rafting, running, orienteering and hiking, with each category gradually becoming more challenging.

“LAST YEAR WE HAD OUR 24-HOUR EVENTERS START AT FIVE IN THE MORNING BY PULLING THEIR PACK RAFTS INTO THE RIVER, HIGH UP IN THE MOUNTAINS, AND THEN PADDLING THEIR WAY DOWN TO THE COAST AS THE SUN ROSE.”

NATHAN FA'AVAE



“Last year we had our 24-hour eventers start at five in the morning by pulling their pack rafts into the river, high up in the mountains, and then paddling their way down to the coast as the sun rose,” says Nathan.

The working relationship between True West and Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio has been based on manaaki and mutual support, with Nathan and his team staying at Kara’s childhood home in Haast during the early stages of race planning.

“It’s been great to stay locally with the whole team and have that connection to the area while working with Kara. The whole region is spectacular in terms of adventure racing, and we have had to get out there to scope out the area. Our competitors are really in for a treat next year.”

The personal connection to Haast runs deep for Kara, who was raised there. “It was my parents who gave me my connection to this place. My father was a local renowned fisherman and pilot, and he was really passionate about showcasing the region and its people. We are really lucky that True West has brought this leg of the race to Haast.”

Kara and Nathan hope the race will draw visitors back to South Westland, an area severely affected by adverse weather and rocky tourism seasons following COVID-19.

“This is such a special place and we really hope that it gives people



an opportunity to truly explore what Haast has to offer and spend real time here, instead of just passing through,” says Kara.

Kara and her whānau will be entering the race in 2025 to commemorate her father and his passion for the area and to celebrate and appreciate their heritage and their whenua. “The finish line for the race next year will be located at the end of a track that my dad built and named. That alone makes it so special for all of us.”

Adventure racing as a sport has a rich and varied history, dating back to its origins in the late 20th century. It began gaining popularity in the 1980s and 1990s with events like the Raid Gauloises in New Zealand and the Eco-Challenge in the United States. These early races were characterised by extreme demands, requiring participants to navigate unmarked wilderness courses, often using multiple disciplines such as trekking, mountain biking, paddling and climbing.



Left: Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio Chief Executive Kara Edwards. Far left: Event organiser Nathan Fa'avae at the finish line of last year's event in Hokitika.



“THIS IS SUCH A SPECIAL PLACE AND WE REALLY HOPE THAT IT GIVES PEOPLE AN OPPORTUNITY TO TRULY EXPLORE WHAT HAAST HAS TO OFFER AND SPEND REAL TIME HERE, INSTEAD OF JUST PASSING THROUGH.”


KARA EDWARDS Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio Chief Executive

New Zealand has been at the forefront of this sport, with its challenging terrain and adventurous spirit providing the perfect backdrop for such events. The Southern Traverse, first held in 1991, was one of New Zealand’s premier adventure races and attracted competitors from around the world. This race helped to cement NZ’s reputation as a global hub for adventure racing.

The sport continued to evolve with the introduction of the Adventure Racing World Series in 2001, which brought a more structured competitive framework and a higher level of international exposure. Nathan Fa’avae has been a significant figure in this global arena, contributing to the sport’s growth and inspiring many through his team’s successes.

The resurgence of interest in adventure racing in New Zealand, marked by events like the True West Adventure Race, continues this tradition. These races not only test the limits of human endurance and teamwork, but also foster a deep connection with the natural environment and local communities.

The collaboration with iwi and local organisations, as seen in the True West Adventure Race, highlights the sport’s potential to bring people together in the spirit of adventure and mutual respect.

The True West Adventure Race will be held in Haast in February 2025. For more information and to register, head to www.truewest.nz. 

Left: Travis Terry with his wife, Tash, and their 11-year-old son, Reece. Far left: Last year's competitors rafting through the Hokitika Gorge. Previous page: Pack rafting down the Mikonui River.

PHOTOGRAPHS (EVENTS): ZAK SHAW

Rising Rakatahi: Mya Kairau on taking the world stage



When rakatahi tell you their goal in life is to be prime minister of Aotearoa one day, you might think it slightly ambitious. But when TE KARAKA writer SASCHA WALL heard these words delivered with confidence and conviction from 19-year-old Murihiku wahine Mya Kairau, she believed her.

MYA (NGĀI TAHU, NGĀPUHI) IS ON A MISSION TO REINFORCE INDIGENOUS capability for Māori across Aotearoa, and to be an example for other indigenous groups around the world. Her extensive achievements in multiple arenas, several on international platforms, mark her as a budding global leader, poised to make a significant impact.

"I have established a resilient and motivated mindset ... this is a message I would love to imprint into the lives of other youth. 'You are more than capable of becoming the person you dream to be, nothing is impossible,'" says Mya.

Ngā Manu Kōrero speech competitions are one of the most significant events on the Māori education calendar for nurturing oratory skills and providing a platform for young voices to bring important issues to their peers, whānau and judges.

Mya's eloquence as a public speaker shone through her participation in 2019, 2020 and 2022. She was awarded first place in the Junior English section at the Manu Kōrero regional competition in 2020, and in 2021 came first equal in the Senior English section. These accomplishments, along with her tenure as Head Girl at Verdon College and her outstanding academic achievements, highlight her exceptional leadership and communication skills.

Mya recently travelled to Vancouver as the only New Zealand representative among 100 delegates in the 2024 International Youth Congress. The three-day gathering aims to bridge the gap between youth and the United Nations through empowering a diverse group of young people to create connections, develop skills and engage with policy.

This year, the key focus of the Youth Congress Seminar was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations (1948). Mya presented her "strategy on rebuilding indigenous capability and capacity," addressing what it is to be Māori, and the enduring impact of colonisation in Aotearoa.

This opportunity not only allowed her to address global audiences but also connect with indigenous youth from other nations, fostering international dialogue and solidarity. Mya was one of the top 15 delegates fully funded to attend the congress. During the conference, Mya received one of three awards to attend and present at another international conference and has her eye on New York for next year's event.

As groundwork towards a future in politics, Mya has spent much of her youth advocating for Māori through her involvement in important talks around community issues. As a representative on the Vodafone Te Rourou youth panel, rakatahi leader on the Murihiku Regeneration project and facilitator of the Ngāi Tahu Rangatahi Tūmeke camps, Mya is a strong and unwavering voice dedicated to empowering young Māori.



“I AM A VERY DETERMINED 19-YEAR-OLD WHO KNOWS WHAT OPPORTUNITIES THE WORLD CAN OFFER. I LIVE BY THE QUOTE ‘IF YOU CAN DREAM IT, YOU CAN ACHIEVE IT’ AND THIS IS WHERE I FEEL AS THOUGH MY MINDSET SHINES THROUGH THE BEST.”

MYA KAIRAU (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāpuhi)

“A huge passion of mine is the Ngāi Tahu Rangatahi Tumeke camps. I have attended these Māori camps for nine years now, and for the past six years have held the position of a tuākana to our tēina. I take pride in holding this position to be a role model to others.”

Supported by Te Pūtahitanga, Mya is also spearheading the development of a global indigenous initiative focused on youth empowerment and success.


She is studying towards a Bachelor of Arts in Social Anthropology and Indigenous Psychology at Massey University after completing a very successful first year at the University of Otago, where she studied Political Science and International Relations. The change in her study environment and course was prompted by a desire to have flexibility to “pursue other avenues that will support my aspirations in making a change in the world.”

When asked what drives her, she responds thoughtfully, “I’ve always been involved with community rōpū. I am heavily involved in discussions surrounding matters in our community and am constantly evolving potential solutions to resolve these matters.”

During her first year of study in Dunedin, Mya embarked on bodybuilding training, a rigorous discipline that demands significant time and dedication. Following her success as the 2023 Novice Shape NZ Champion, Mya went on to represent Aotearoa in Germany at the prestigious International Bodybuilding Mr and Mrs Universe competition late last year.



Suffice to say Mya embodies resilience, leadership, and a profound commitment to Māori and community, boldly representing her aspirations on various world stages. Her journey towards achieving her aspiration to be Prime Minister reflects her unwavering dedication and boundless potential. She is a huge inspiration for rangatahi in Murihiku and beyond to pursue their dreams with determination and perseverance.

“I am a very determined 19-year-old who knows what opportunities the world can offer. I live by the quote ‘if you can dream it, you can achieve it’ and this is where I feel as though my mindset shines through the best.” 

Above: Mya Kairau receiving her award ‘Dedicated to Excellence in Diplomacy and the Protection of Peace,’ presented by the Voice for Rights International Association at the International Youth Congress Seminar in Canada.

Left: Mya with her first-place trophy in the ‘Novice Shape’ category at the 2023 New Zealand Bodybuilding Championships in New Plymouth.

PHOTOGRAPHS: SUPPLIED

Once abundant now endangered

NĀ JODY O'CALLAGHAN

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND, A HARMFUL IDEOLOGY FOR TAONGA SPECIES who are in dire need of public presence and attention.

Mohua, the yellowhead (*Mohoua Ochrocephala*), is a small, rare endemic bird with a bright yellow head and large powerful feet. They are one of 54 birds listed as taonga species in the Ngāi Tahu Settlement Claims Act 1998, and they are at risk of extinction.

Very few New Zealanders have seen mohua. Field experts from the Department of Conservation (DOC) say there are only two locations left where mohua seem to be doing well – in the Landsborough Valley of South Westland and near the south branch of the Hurunui.

Their low profile, isolation and low genetic diversity make it extremely difficult to manage their recovery. The only place where most New Zealanders will see mohua is on a \$100 note.

Conservation Minister Tame Potaka mentioned in a recent interview that it will cost too much to save every single species and that we need to target only those of high value.

However, the whakapapa of te taiao relies on a collective of species to thrive, not individuals. Whakapapa stores key information, a reminder of where things come from, where to find them, when to use them and for what purpose.

Māori can recite whakapapa from the beginning of creation, from the stars to the oceans, from the trees to the birds to the birth of the first human. This knowledge system connects us to our natural environment and everything in it, living as part of a system, not dominating or changing it.

With the whakapapa of mohua all but lost, research is underway to discover more about its identity. The 1920 volume of *Traditional Lifeways of the Southern Māori* by James Herries Beattie notes the yellowheads or native canaries were known as pōpokotea. *Papers past, Pipiwharauoa*, Issue 79, published in 1904, lists hihipopokera, momohua, pōpokotea, popotea and upokotea. Te Aka dictionary lists the Māori name for yellowhead as either hihipopokera, momohua or mōhuahua. Pōpokotea, popotea and upokotea are all in reference to the whitehead (*mohoua albicilla*), a relative of the yellowhead.

The first species recovery plan for mohua was written in 1993 by Colin O'Donell (DOC) and the species recovery group remains active today. It's made up of Kāi Tahu representatives and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu technical support, DOC staff and the Mohua Charitable Trust.

The vision is to one day walk away and leave mohua and other species to thrive in their natural environment without intervention.

Colin O'Donell has worked for DOC for over 40 years and remembers being told by a kaumātua in the South Island that tīeke were the kaitiaki of mixed species feeding flocks. The leader of the group, it would guide others in the dislodgment of bark to feed the collective. As tīeke numbers declined, mohua took on the lead role.

THE ONLY PLACE WHERE MOST NEW ZEALANDERS WILL SEE MOHUA IS ON A \$100 NOTE ... WITH THE WHAKAPAPA OF MOHUA ALL BUT LOST, RESEARCH IS UNDERWAY TO DISCOVER MORE ABOUT ITS IDENTITY.



Mohua have powerful feet and a boney spine-like tail. They use their features to climb trees and scratch out bark to uncover food. They have been sighted following tīeke on Te Au Moana (Breaksea Island) and will wait for the larger tīeke to rip moss from the tree trunks and boulders, feeding on the leftovers of their larger colleagues.

Their nests also play host to eggs and chicks of koekoeā (long-tailed cuckoos). The koekoeā lay one egg in each mohua nest, and if they find a nest with mohua chicks instead of eggs, they eat the chicks. Koekoeā eggs develop more quickly than mohua, so they usually hatch first. The koekoeā chick then spends time pushing the mohua eggs and chicks out of the nest.

MOHUA WERE ONCE THE MOST COMMON FOREST BIRD IN THE SOUTH ISLAND. THE HAWDON AND EGLINTON VALLEYS WERE FULL OF THEM AND THERE WERE ALWAYS YELLOW-CROWNED KĀKĀRIKI AND FANTAILS FLYING WITH THEM. FORTY YEARS AGO THERE WERE MOHUA IN THE OTEHAKE AND POULTER VALLEYS IN ARTHUR'S PASS, LEITHEN BUSH, BURWOOD BUSH, WAIKAIA, THE LONGWOODS AND ROWALLAN IN SOUTHLAND. BUT IN 2024, THEY CAN'T BE FOUND AT ANY OF THESE LOCATIONS.



Right: Nesting tree. PHOTOGRAPH: J. VAN DER WETERING

Below: Mohua eggs in Caitlins; below left: banded Mohua in Caitlins. PHOTOGRAPHS: COLIN O'DONELL



In the 1980s, two mohua nests were recorded with koekoeā in them, but they were unable to eject the mohua. Nesting in the holes of tall beech trees, it can be hard for koekoeā to tip the mohua eggs or chicks out. At this nest, the koekoeā chick gave up and the mohua and koekoeā chicks were raised together. The mohua chick fledged first, probably because they are much smaller, weighing just 25-30g.

Mohua were once the most common forest bird in the South Island. The Hawdon and Eglinton valleys were full of them and there were always yellow-crowned kākārīki and fantails flying with them. Forty years ago there were mohua in the Otehake and Poulter valleys in Arthur's Pass, Leithen Bush, Burwood Bush, Waikaia, the Longwoods and

Rowallan in Southland. But in 2024, they can't be found at any of these locations.

Intervention methods like stoat and rat eradication, banding, monitoring and translocations have saved small populations from extinction. However, the adaptations of mohua make them extremely vulnerable. When they are laying and incubating their eggs, they don't leave the nest for weeks. They cannot hear a predator climbing the tree to access their nest until it is too late, and by that time there is no escape because their nest has only one entry/exit point.

In the 1970s, there was a small population on Mt Stokes in the Marlborough Sounds. The population grew to over 100 birds, then



Above, back row, from left to right: Clement Lagrue (DOC), Marion Rhodes (Mohua Charitable Trust), Roselind Cole (DOC), Graeme Elliot (DOC), Kathryn (Kat) Longstaff (DOC), Johanna Kann (DOC), Raewyn Cook (Ngāi Tahu Representative); front: Puawai Swindells-Wallace (Mohua research contractor), Colin O'Donell, Rebecca Teele (DOC). Not in the photo and part of the team: Lisa Thurlow (DOC), and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu environmental advisers, Jana Hayes and Ben Hodgson. PHOTOGRAPH: THE MOHUA SPECIES RECOVERY GROUP

“WE HAVE NOT FIGURED OUT HOW TO RETURN THEM TO THEIR FORMER RANGE. WITH LITTLE PREDATOR-FREE HABITAT LEFT, THERE IS SIMPLY NOT ENOUGH FOREST WHERE THEY CAN BE PROTECTED FROM STOATS AND RATS. WHEN THEY ARE NOT PREDATED IN THEIR NEST, THEY BECOME FOREST FLOOR SNACKS WHEN FEEDING ON THE GROUND.”

THE MOHUA SPECIES RECOVERY TEAM

in 1999 and 2000 there were two beech tree masting events resulting in an abundance of food and an influx of rats and stoats. Sadly, only four birds (one female) were saved and these were transferred to Nukuwaiata (Chedwode Islands).

One of the biggest problems when trying to regenerate populations is their low genetic diversity.


When conditions are right, these little yellowheads enjoy longevity. Graeme Elliot, a long-time colleague of Colin, and also part of the species recovery team, believes the record for the oldest-known surviving and breeding mohua is 14 years.

According to DOC's database there was a pair in the Eglinton Valley that lived to 16, but the eggs they produced were infertile during their last few seasons.

The Mohua Species Recovery team notes, “We have not figured out how to return them to their former range. With little predator-free habitat left, there is simply not enough forest where they can be protected from stoats and rats. When they are not predated in their nest, they become forest floor snacks when feeding on the ground.”

When feeding in their winter flocks, mohua scramble up tree trunks and among branches, dislodging moss and bark in a noisy frenzy. Historically, these flocks could number more than 100, and were frequently joined by pīpipi, kākārīki karaka, ririro, miromiro and piwakawaka.

Known as a signal of the state of the ngahere, when the mohua are thriving it's a sign the ecosystem is healthy. If they disappear, it's a warning the whole forest is struggling.

While iconic birds like kiwi, kākāpō and takahē are incredibly appealing to visitors despite being discrete and nocturnal, there is nothing like experiencing a flock of bright yellow mohua darting through the canopies chatting and interacting and offering an experience that no other bird species can claim. 

Puawai Swindells is a taonga species representative working with Hoiho/Takaraha (yellow eyed penguin) and wants to encourage Kāi Tahu whānau whānui to take up the role of kaitiakitaka as a taonga species representative for Ngāi Tahu.



Reconnection – a life-long desire

Although she's lived in Tāmaki Makaurau for more than half her life, Jillian Friedlander is still a southern girl at heart. The warm and vivacious Creative Director of the Friedlander Foundation sits down with kaituhi **ANNA BRANKIN** to reflect on her childhood, her family and career, and shares a yearning to reconnect with her roots.

Above: Jillian's great grandfather with her father as a young boy; Friedlander Foundation creative director Jillian exudes the warmth and vivaciousness for which she is well known. PHOTOGRAPHS: SUPPLIED

"MY HUSBAND DANIEL LIKES TO SAY THAT I'M THE ONLY WOMAN HE knows who can hunt, fish, skin a possum and still wear a pair of heels," Jillian says. It's been nearly 30 years since she moved away, yet her upbringing in the heart of Murihiku has left an indelible mark.

Jillian and her sisters cultivated a deep connection to the land during their childhood, moving around between the Catlins, Waihōpai and Ōtepoti. Although she didn't realise it at the time, the family's Kāi Tahu whakapapa had a strong influence on their way of life. Jillian has a formative memory of being four years old and riding on her dad's shoulders in the dark during a muttonbirding trip down on Whenua Hou. Her parents never used the term mahika kai to describe their food gathering practices, but that's what they did.

"We'd go to Oreti Beach to get tuatuas, or Dad would go out and get pāua and our job as children would be to get the old-fashioned hand grinder and mince it all up to make the patties," she says. "Someone would get a sack of oysters from Bluff and all the uncles would come around. They weren't actually uncles, but that was how things were, especially when someone had oysters. One for the pot and two for the belly."



There were plenty of hāngī, with the kids helping out with the digging and pulling sacks over before sitting on upturned beer crates to wait for their kai ... the house was always full of music.

With three daughters, Jillian's dad quickly got over any notion of what girls should or shouldn't do. "We didn't really get much choice in the fact that we'd be going out hunting and fishing, and playing rugby with the other kids," she says. "Church on Sunday was about the only time we wore skirts or dresses."

The whānau spent a good chunk of Jillian's childhood on a farm near MacLennan, in the Catlins, where she and her sisters had 300 acres of native bush to explore.

"We learned about the different trees and flowers in the bush, and the uses for them. My great granny, she was based in Mataura, but she'd grown up in the MacLennan and knew about bush medicine," Jillian says. "So we always knew how to identify the pepper trees, and how to check the bark on the trunk of a rātā to figure out which way was north."

Although she loved her upbringing as a "bush kid", Jillian knew from a young age that her life's trajectory would take her away from Murihiku. "There was a creative streak in the family that I inherited. I was always involved in colour and music, and I had this grand dream of going to Paris to be a creative."

After studying art history at university, a stint in hospitality in Queenstown and some overseas travel, Jillian found herself in Tāmaki Makaurau, helping her sister out with her newborn baby.

"WE LEARNED ABOUT THE DIFFERENT TREES AND FLOWERS IN THE BUSH, AND THE USES FOR THEM. MY GREAT GRANNY, SHE WAS BASED IN MATAURA, BUT SHE'D GROWN UP IN THE MACLENNAN AND KNEW ABOUT BUSH MEDICINE. SO WE ALWAYS KNEW HOW TO IDENTIFY THE PEPPER TREES, AND HOW TO CHECK THE BARK ON THE TRUNK OF A RĀTĀ TO FIGURE OUT WHICH WAY WAS NORTH."

JILLIAN FRIEDLANDER

"I was 23 and felt so adult, but I was just stumbling around really. That was when I met my husband and, as they say, that was that."

Daniel's family runs the Friedlander Foundation, a private philanthropic trust that supports initiatives under three main pillars: the arts, youth development and medical sustainability. Jillian was immediately drawn to the first pillar, seeing the chance to put her lifelong interest in the arts to good use.

"After joining the Friedlander family I observed a lot from the sidelines, and the biggest thing I learned was about equal opportunity," she says. "All of our projects are about giving equal opportunity and having an impact. It's not just a feel good thing – it has to actually make a difference."

Jillian is now Creative Director for the Friedlander Foundation, and is proud to have led several projects that foster new talent and create opportunities for artists – from sponsoring budding opera singers and ballerinas to funding The Lullaby Project, a kaupapa run by Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute in which professional artists support teenage parents to write personal lullabies for their babies.

"I also considered it imperative that we do something for Māori artists, and that's why we came up with Te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa," says Jillian. Established in 2020 in partnership with Arts Foundation Te Tumu Toi, Te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa is awarded annually to a Māori or Pasifika artist. It celebrates and uplifts the innate creativity of Māori artists and supports their ongoing work with a \$30,000 award. To date we have partnered with two Ngāi Tahu artists – Ariana Tikao and Dr Areta Wilkinson.

Creating this award was something of a milestone for Jillian, who has not always found it straightforward to celebrate her own identity as a wahine Māori. In part, this was because she didn't know much about her whakapapa.

"My mum and dad were quite isolated from their families. My dad's father was killed on the farm in an accident and my granny remarried quite quickly and moved away.

"Meanwhile, my mum was adopted. We were able to track her birth mother eventually but all we know about her birth father is that he was referred to as the 'half-caste'."

Unfortunately, it was common for Māori whānau to conceal their heritage in those days to avoid prejudice and better assimilate into Pākehā society. Excuses were made for family with darker colouring, including Jillian, who grew up hearing the story that she was so olive at birth that she was almost mixed up with another baby at the hospital.

"It just wasn't spoken about. The older generation would say 'it's just a little bit of Italian in the family', and I was always told that I was a throwback, or that I'd been touched with the tar brush. That was a classic one, so I internalised that. It's not that I was ashamed to be Māori, but I was cautious."



Above: Jillian with twin daughters Arielle and Maia.
Left: Jillian's taonga, Waihono was carved by Gavin Thompson and gifted to her while she was recovering from a significant illness. The pāua eyes represent her two girls.

MEANWHILE, JILLIAN'S TWIN DAUGHTERS, ARIELLE AND MAIA (21), HAVE BEEN A HUGE INSPIRATION IN HER DECISION TO RECLAIM HER WHAKAPAPA, AS SHE SEES IT AS HER RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THEY UNDERSTAND THEIR CONNECTION TO THEIR KĀI TAHU ROOTS.

"I WAS ALWAYS BROUGHT UP TO BELIEVE THAT IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU, IT'S ABOUT THE NEXT GENERATION AND THEIR CHILDREN, AND THAT YOUR JOB IS TO MAKE SURE THEY UNDERSTAND THEIR CONNECTION TO THE LAND, THEIR RIVER, THEIR MOUNTAIN. THAT'S HOW I WAS ALWAYS TAUGHT TO IDENTIFY WHO YOU ARE."

These attitudes left Jillian with a sense she had to wear a mask to conceal her true identity, and only recently gained the confidence to shake it off. "I just had to take it on the chin and I couldn't make a fuss about it. That's why I talk about the masks we all wear. It's not that you choose to wear them, because it bloody hurts. I've basically laid mine off now."

Over the years, Jillian has become increasingly curious about her heritage, determined to learn more and make up for many years of disconnection.

"I've been lucky enough to be involved with global women's groups and I saw other women taking ownership of their lineage when I'd never really understood mine," she said. "I've always felt a wee bit anchor-less. I'm still cautious about learning more, but now it's because I don't want to be seen as an interloper. But I want to be able to be part of, to have that foundation, that anchor."

Meanwhile, Jillian's twin daughters, Arielle and Maia (21), have been a huge inspiration in her decision to reclaim her whakapapa, as she sees it as her responsibility to ensure they understand their connection to their Kāi Tahu roots.

"I was always brought up to believe that it's not about you, it's about the next generation and their children, and that your job is to make sure


they understand their connection to the land, their river, their mountain. That's how I was always taught to identify who you are."

Jillian is proud that society has evolved to the extent that Arielle learned te reo Māori in high school – an opportunity that didn't exist during her own school days – and is now incorporating indigenous studies into her degree at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. It's a relief for Jillian to know that her children will not feel the weight of that caution around their culture and identity.

"It's slightly different for Maia, who had a stroke at birth," says Jillian. "But she is a huge part of the equation of why I want to know about my heritage now, because she has taught me so much about being in the moment, listening to my intuition and my gut."

"Maia's bravery through her brain injury and her everyday learning has shown me her courage with a full and happy heart. The strength she shows allows me to come out from the sidelines and share my voice."

Thirty odd years later, and Jillian's intuition takes her back to her childhood and that profound connection to the natural environment.

"I still find peace when I'm walking through the bush, seeing the light filter through. All of a sudden different leaves have a different iridescence and the birds come and the leaves crunch and all the senses are filled. That's what grounds me." 



Photographs and words nā PHIL TUMATAROA

TE AO O TE MĀORI

A WINDOW INTO THE RICH LIFESTYLES OF CONTEMPORARY MĀORI





Jason Phillips cringes when he thinks back to his early days as an on-air radio host with Tahu FM.

“I didn’t have any reo whatsoever and my pronunciation was really terrible as well.”

That has changed a lot over the past nine years honing his language skills and his craft while hosting various breakfast, daytime and drive shows on the popular iwi radio station based in Ōtautahi.

Jason (Kāti Mako Kāti Irākehu) says as well as taking te reo classes he has also absorbed the language through learning waiata, kapa haka and had amazing support from work mates and the people around him.

“Improving my reo and my cultural development has been a big part of my journey here at Tahu.”

Jason completed a radio diploma in Auckland and did a short stint with Media Works before a whānau connection suggested moving home to join the team and step in for Waipounamu Te Karu who was away on maternity leave at the time.

“It’s almost impossible to get an on-air job straight out of training school – it was meant to be.”


While a lot of the job is in a sound proof room, the role also offers plenty of opportunities outside of the studio, MCing at tribal events like Hui-ā-Iwi and road shows, as well as kapa haka competitions and community events.

“I have a genuine interest in people, I love doing events and meeting people who listen to me on the radio, and it helps that I don’t mind telling embarrassing stories about myself – it builds trust and connects you with whānau.”

Jason is now entering a new phase of his journey and has made the move to Programme Director, a role that sees him responsible for the unique sound and content offerings of the station.

While he will miss being behind the microphone, he’s excited about the change and the opportunity it offers to learn a new side of the industry.

“I want to learn how to run an iwi radio station – so doing this is the next step to maybe one day becoming a station manager.

“I’m stepping back from on-air and stepping up into a new role that’s about crafting a radio station for our iwi. I am passionate about radio and I love my job at Tahu FM. We celebrate our people – it’s such a breath of fresh air.” 





Huikaau – Where Currents Meet

NĀ HANNAH KERR

Established in 1884, the Dunedin Public Art Gallery (DPAG) housed the first public art collection in Aotearoa. Artworks from this original collection have been exhibited many times over the past 140 years. Today, a new exhibition showcases these pieces alongside more contemporary works that also aim to express the connection Kāi Tahu has to this whenua, extending from Te Tai o Araiteuru to the inland regions.

Huikaau – Where Currents Meet, represents many perspectives, histories, stories, places and people and takes manuhiri through the changing artistic attitudes of the gallery since its founding.

The exhibition includes several iconic pieces from the DPAG permanent collection such as Rita Angus' watercolour of *Lake Wanaka, Pembroke* (1939), Joanna Margaret Paul's *Panoply* (1984) and visiting artist Yang Yongliang's *Artificial Wonderland II, Travelers among Mountains and Streams* (2014). It also introduces the Paemanu Art

Collection, a loan collection of contemporary works by Kāi Tahu artists that act as nohoaka – a unique pathway through which to explore the gallery collection.

The name Huikaau references a particular place at the mouth of Otago Harbour where the ocean currents join the harbour. A water theme runs throughout the exhibition, as a connector, a carrier of stories and a spiritual link.

Walking into the heart of the large gallery space, manuhiri are greeted with a view of *Tūtakitaka* (2021) created collaboratively by Kāi Tahu artists Madison Kelly and Mya Morrison-Middleton. This stunning creation provides you with a moment, a nohoaka, to connect and ground yourself, before embarking on a journey through past, present and future as you take in the entire exhibition.

Behind *Tūtakitaka*, Ross Hemera's (Waitaha, Ngāti Mamoe, Ngāi Tahu) newly-commissioned *Horotea ngā tapuae i te awa*

adorns the wall. As Poutokomanawa of Paemanu: Ngāi Tahu Contemporary Visual Arts, Hemera's work occupies an important position in the exhibition. His work is offered as a mihi to his tīpuna, and displays a distinct feature of Kāi Tahu cultural practice.

Ana whakairo, art found on the walls of rock shelters throughout our takiwā, have been a lifelong inspiration to him. He was raised on the river beds of the Waitaki Awa. Across the multiple panels of *Horotea ngā tapuae i te awa*, the viewer is taken on a journey, with Hemera's drawings offering accounts of treasured Kāi Tahu stories (kōrero tuku iho), layered with personal whakapapa and experiences.

Nohoaka are important to us as Kāi Tahu, as sites of occupation along navigational routes through Te Waipounamu. In *Huikaau* they provide sites of pause and reflection, creating space for new voices and contributors.



HUIKAAU – where currents meet 2023, installation views, Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Above: Centre back wall: ROSS HEMERA [Waitaha, Ngāti Mamoe, Ngāi Tahu] *Horotea ngā tapuae i te awa* 2023 – pencil on board. Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, commissioned by the Gallery 2023.

In centre of room: MADISON KELLY [Kāi Tahu, Kāti Mamoe], MYA MORRISON-MIDDLETON [Ngāi Tahu, Ngāi Tūāhuriri] *Tūtakitaka* 2021 – tohorā rara (found near Waiputai), milled harakeke fibre, whītau (Makaweroa, Ruapani, no.88), glass beads, tōtara, feathers, seaglass, two channel audio track. Paemanu Art Collection on loan to Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Courtesy of the artist and Paemanu Charitable Trust.

Right: FIONA PARDINGTON [Kāi Tahu, Kāti Mamoe, Ngāti Kahungunu] *Still Life with Albatross feathers, Pounamu and Coral Hearts (Ripiro Beach)* 2014 – pigment inks on Hahnemuhle photo rag 308gsm paper. Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 2021 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society. PHOTOGRAPHS: SUPPLIED





HUIKAAU – where currents meet 2023, installation views, Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Above: Centre back wall: **AYESHA GREEN** [Kāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu] **Inside Tamatea** 2021 – acrylic, vinyl. *Paemanu Art Collection on loan to Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Courtesy of the artist and Paemanu Charitable Trust.*

In centre of room: various weavers including **EMMA KESHA** (Samoa), **MRS AGATHA JOHNSON** (Cook Islands), **MRS MATAGI** (Niue)

Communal Whāriki 1995 – Pandanus and kiekie. *Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Given 1995 by the artists. PHOTOGRAPH: SUPPLIED*

Right: **VICKI LENIHAN** [Waitaha, Kāti Māmoe, Ngāi Tahu] **He Whao | Skills** 2021 **He kai kei aku rīkarika – there is food at my hands –** SLS nylon and steel acrylic paint. *Paemanu Art Collection on loan to Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Courtesy of the artist and Paemanu Charitable Trust.*

PHOTOGRAPH: SUPPLIED

Below: **SIMON KAAAN** [Kāi Tahu, Kāti Irakehu, Kāti Mako] **Whakaruku** 2021 – Digital photograph on cotton paper, ceramic waka.

Paemanu Art Collection on loan to Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Courtesy of the artist and Paemanu Charitable Trust.

PHOTOGRAPH: DEREK MORRISON / CERAMICS COURTESY OF WI TAEPA






Moewai Marsh (Kāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairoa, Puketeraki, Kāti Huirapa) is one of those new voices. Her *Tuturu series 1-3* uses pigments sourced from the earth at Arai Te Uru, Puketeraki, and Ōtākou marae, on handmade paper crafted from natural materials. Marsh's work, like Hemera's, carries *kōrero tuku iho* of whakapapa and aroha, and displays traditional Māori art techniques, expertly embodying the connection *mana whenua* have to *te taiao*.

While viewing Simon Kaan's *Whakaruku* (2021), a photograph of land and sea, split across multiple canvases, my sister pointed to a blurry *mauka* in the backdrop and said, "I know my *mauka* when I see it". Kaan has harnessed the power of spiritual links that we as Kāi Tahu have with *moana* and

whenua, and offered a *nohoaka* to consider these connections.

Huikaau pushes the viewer to change their perspective throughout the space. The selection of works was purposefully chosen to display the histories, stories and people of our region throughout time. On the surface it might be hard for one to understand the connection of each piece to another, but the powerful underlying feeling my sister and I had while visiting the exhibition was the connection the pieces have to our *whenua*, and to us as *mana whenua*.

The exhibition also "acts as a space of power and shows the potential of art to carry our stories, to disrupt conventions of the modern day, and to innovate and transform our perspectives." 

The exhibition was developed through conversation with a wide range of contributors. Dunedin Public Art Gallery would like to acknowledge Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou and Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki, and in particular Claire Kaahu White, Robert Sullivan and Paulette Tamati-Elliffe for their support. Thanks also to Paemanu: Ngāi Tahu Contemporary Visual Arts, who placed their collection into DPAG's care. (<https://dunedin.art.museum/exhibitions/present/huikaau/>)

Huikaau – Where Currents Meet, runs at Dunedin Public Art Gallery until October 31, 2025.

Herries Beattie Digital Collection Launch

On 6 June, a delegation from the Ngāi Tahu Archive travelled to Ōtepoti for the launch of the Hocken Collections' digital collection of ethnographer James Herries Beattie's extensive papers. Fittingly the launch date would have been Beattie's 143rd birthday.

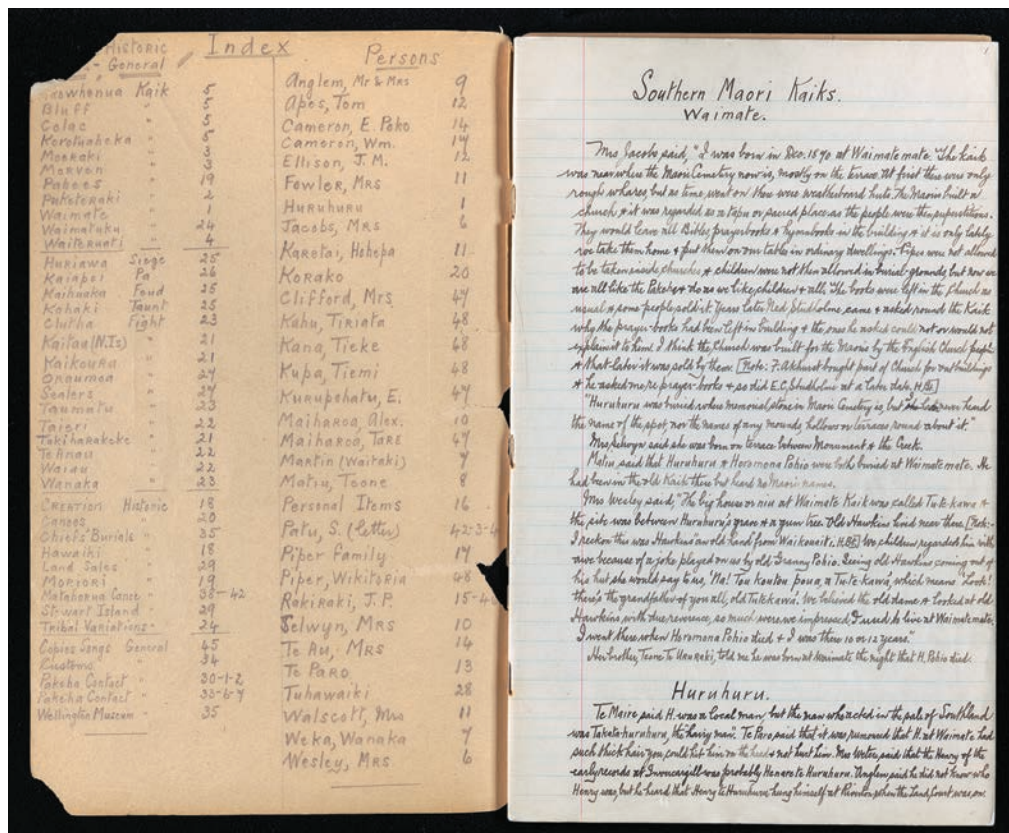
Beattie was an avid collector of the stories and place names of Te Waipounamu. In the early decades of the twentieth century, he travelled the island by train and bike, interviewing local people. His collection of published and unpublished work has been used, in combination with other traditional knowledge and sources,

to inform the WAI 27 Waitangi Tribunal Claim, to identify place names for Kā Huru Manu, and for the preparation of biographies in the *Tāngata Ngāi Tahu: People of Ngāi Tahu* series. The significance of the Beattie papers was recognised in 2018 when the collection was inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World New Zealand register.

The launch event brought together multiple generations of Beattie's descendants, local Kāi Tahu, Hocken staff and the wider community to celebrate the work of Beattie and the massive project

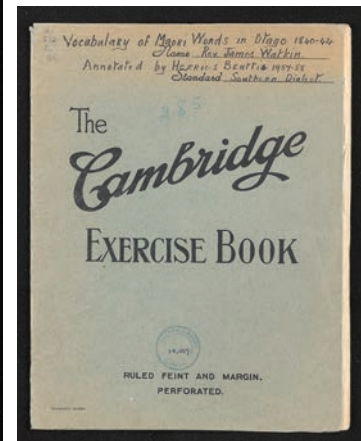
to digitise this collection as part of the Hocken's Kāi Tahu Digitisation Programme. The Ngāi Tahu Archive and local Papatipu Rūnaka have worked together with the Hocken Collections on this important project.

The Ngāi Tahu Archive was presented with a collection of the digitised records at the launch, which will in time also be made available on Kareao. For now, the digitised records can be explored through the Hocken Digital Collections portal: <https://hocken.recollect.co.nz/pages/beattie>



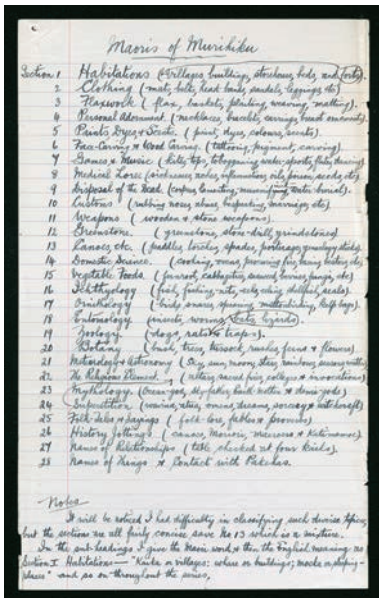
Below: Notebook cover. From *Typescript vocabulary of Maori words, compiled by the Reverend James Watkin in 1840-1844 and annotated by Herries in 1957-1958, MS-582/E/36.*

HOCKEN COLLECTIONS,
ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO



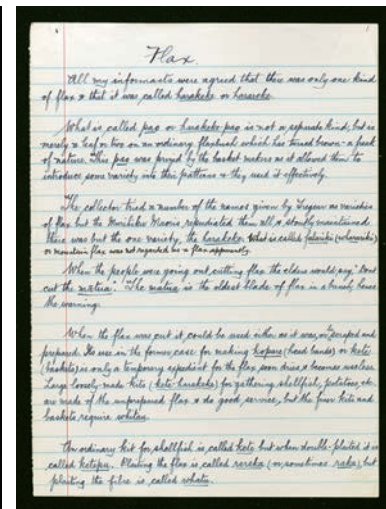
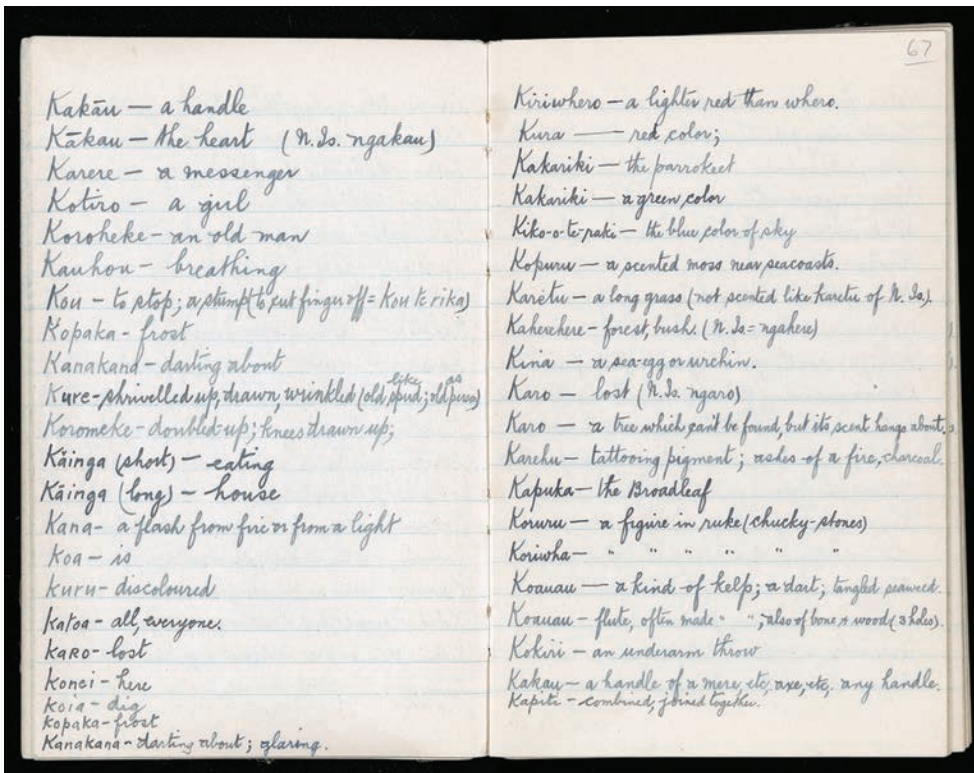
Left: 'Southern Maori Kaiks' [kāika]. From *General Maori information, book 2, MS-582/E/12.*

HOCKEN COLLECTIONS,
ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO



Above: Excerpt from *Maori words used in information under heading Murihiku, MS-582/E/35*. HOCKEN COLLECTIONS, ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

Above: Descendants of James Herries Beattie, Hocken Collections staff, Kāi Tahu whānui, and Ngāi Tahu Archive representatives at the launch of the digitised Herries Beattie Collection, Hocken Collections, Ōtākou Whakaihū Waka University of Otago, 6 June 2024. PHOTOGRAPH: TOM RILEY



Above: 'Flax'. From *Record of interviews with South Island Maori, entitled, 'The Maori in Murihiku', sections 1 to 15, MS-0181/001*. Left: Excerpt from *Maori words used in information under heading Murihiku, MS-582/E/35*. HOCKEN COLLECTIONS, ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

HE TAKATA



PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED

SASCHA WALL

NGĀI TAHU – AWARUA

My name is Sascha Wall (née Young). I am currently working as a communications advisor for Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. My mahi involves taking care of *Te Pānui Rūnaka*, as well as making contributions to TE KARAKA. I was born and grew up in Waihōpai and spent a lot of time with my grandparents in Awarua where my marae, Te Rau Aroha, sits. I have one younger brother, Breyton, who is six years younger than me and much cooler and smarter. Our childhood was a very happy one, full of adventure, aroha and plenty of amazing kai. Our whānau whakapapa to the tītī islands, so I spent 2-3 weeks on our moutere, Kahuāriki every year from the age of two to 14. I returned to Kahuāriki this year with my husband and have never felt such gratitude in my life. As integral as the birding mahi is to the experience, the significance of each day spent there is whānau. My father, Justin, and grandfather, Geoff, demonstrate such kaitiakitanga for our tikanga moutere. This leadership has shaped who I am today, and I will be incredibly proud to raise my own tamariki in this whānau one day.

Left: Sascha and her grandmother, Trish Young.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD DAY?

One that begins with kāwhe and ends with a completed to-do list.

ONE THING YOU COULD NOT LIVE WITHOUT?

Kāwhe, or a to-do list.

WHO OR WHAT INSPIRES YOU AND WHY?

Both for different reasons, but I would have to say my māmā and my Nan. They are both the strongest wāhine I know. Love them to pieces.

HIGHLIGHT IN THE LAST YEAR AND WHY?

In the last year my husband and I spent 10 months in Murihiku, including two weeks on my whānau Titi Island, Kahuāriki. Any time I can spend with my wider whānau always feels like a blessing.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

Seven months travelling last year from Japan and Singapore to the UK/Europe, then home via Vietnam, Indonesia and Australia.

FAVOURITE WAY TO CHILL OUT? FAVOURITE PLACE?

At home in my own space. I love slow mornings with music playing, kāwhe in hand and my kurī at my side.

DANCE OR WALLFLOWER?

Dance, every time ... and I'm dragging the wallflowers to the floor with me.

WHAT FOOD COULD YOU NOT LIVE WITHOUT?

Definitely kai moana. I'm from Waihōpai/Awarua so tio, kūtai, paua, kōura, kina and cod.

WHAT MEAL DO YOU COOK THE MOST?


I've been trying to nail making a Japanese ramen from scratch for about three years, so probably that, once a month or so. I really value variety in my diet, so I try to keep it creative in the kāuta.

GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT?

All the travel I've managed so far. In my 29 years, I have visited 33 countries. I love finding parallels between the values of te ao Māori and other cultures; there are so many.

I think it's also important to appreciate how different our ways of living can be across the globe. As well as a collection of new experiences, travel has given me the greatest appreciation for Aotearoa.

DO YOU HAVE AN ASPIRATION FOR KĀI TAHU TO ACHIEVE BY 2050?

To have provided and continue to provide our tamariki with the resources to grow up with, and be confident in their reo. I would also love to see a model of teaching te reo that also supports different learning styles. Language is the central pillar to connection and understanding, but learning is so subjective. Some learn better in classrooms, some through kōrero, and some through action. All of us need compassion in learning. 



TE WAIPOUNAMU

TANGATA WHENUA PLACE NAMES
PRIOR TO EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT



Key to symbols

- Mouna
- Pa / kāinga
- Wāhinga Kai
- Wahi Tapu / Drupa
- Significant Site
- Awa
- Cove
- Spring / Waterfall

Scale: 1:1,000,000



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Te Tōhutu o te Whānau

TE TAUPŪ WHIRI
TE RŌ MĀORI

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
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