

Nga Whakamaramatanga o te Moana

These personal reflections were gathered as part of an investigation into marine protection on the Wairarapa Coast by the Department of Conservation in association with Rangitaane o Wairarapa and Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairarapa. The investigation, due for completion in late 2003, revealed a startling lack of historical literature on our coast. To fill the gap in our knowledge and to help us form marine protection strategies for the future, we asked six kaumatua to tell us of their relationship with the coast, and share their memories of specific locations between Akitio and Palliser.

Their collective memory now forms an important body of work for us to reflect on now, and in the future.

Te Nahu Haeata

Te Nahu Haeata – Ngati Hamua te hapu, Rangitaane me Ngati Kahungunu nga iwi. Te Nahu has worked up and down the coast for the Postal and Telegraph service and as a shearer and fencer on the coastal stations.



I always liked to be near the coast....

I always liked to be near the coast. You only took what you needed because it was plentiful at the time ay? You didn't have to go and rape the blimbling thing, it was there all the time. The only time we used to do quite a bit was when we got shark in the bay at Waikekeno which was all sandy in those days. Pauas were ankle deep. I thought it would be there forever. But there you are...that's what happened.

Waikekeno, that's where my father's mother came from. Renata was her family name. We went to Flat Point but most of the time we went to Waikekeno. Because you know, it was always there. Where we'd always gone. You didn't have to go away from Waikekeno to get anything. It was all there in the one place. You know, same as anywhere along the coast.

If we do happen to go to Flat Point or Glenburn now it makes me cry when they say "that's a big crayfish" and I look at the crayfish and I think to myself "the length of those crayfish was the width of the crayfish in the old days". That's how big they were. They were big crayfish!

I can remember at Castlepoint there. They used to have break up dances for the shearing. They used to make money for the school and they used to have these crayfish done up in flowers and all and they used to auction them.

That was our deep freeze...

We would be there for a couple of months, out the coast. Then we would come home. We would have these bags of dried stuff there, pauas and crayfish and shark and that. Well that was our deep freeze!

We'd come back and stick them away, all our dry stuff there. When we needed it we'd just get it out. With the crayfish we'd just steam it and it would virtually go back to how it was. Or have it dry, eat it dry.

We had an old 1929 Dodge truck in those days. Unfortunately I missed the horse and dray days! Even with the old truck we used to have to stop at different points and fill up the radiator. I suppose it used to take 2 or 3 hours on the old truck.

We'd go out a couple of times a year before winter. Maybe this time of the year (January) then round about Easter. We went out as a family. The old man used to take us and pick up some of the families on the way. Like Johnny Walker and them, their family. Dicky Nunn was a transport operator in those days in Gladstone. He used to have a big truck so the whole family used to hop on there with all our gear and that. A couple of tents. We'd just camp out there for a couple of months.

An abundance of food there...

There was that much there. An abundance of food there that you knew you couldn't take the lot anyway! You'd only take what you wanted for tea or whatever. We'd take so much for the winter period. That's how we used to do it.

Even fishing from off the shore, just throw a line. Well I don't know what the fish was but we used to get a hell of a lot of fish. Even snapper and that's hard to get off shore.

We sort of knew about what to do and what not to do. It wasn't allowed to eat pauas or any food stuff in the water or if you broke anything, you took a paua out of the water and it broke you had to take the whole thing out. Same with the kina.

But in those days we used to get shark. Of course we used to strip them and dry them, hang them out in the sun there. Crayfish, the tails. We only used to eat the heads and take the tails out of the shell, put a cut down the centre and hang them on the fence. Mind you in those days you used to get a lot of tails on the fence! We used to tap them down with a little mallet and hang them out for two or three days and they would dry out.

I used to hate the job of bashing pauas up. You know you get sacks of pauas and then you've got to shuck them and then you've got to take the huas off and the teeth. Then you've got to bash them and then hang them out on the fence. Then at night bring them back in and bash them again the other way. Then hang them out on the fence again. You know it was a big job... and I used to like to... bugger off! I didn't mind the going in and getting them but the job was always there when I came back. So you couldn't escape it.

The biggest crayfish I ever caught...

I can remember catching a crayfish, about the easiest crayfish I ever caught. I was working at Te Wharau at the time and I was working on the South County. I had to follow the grader, clearing out the little holes where the culvert went across the road. So I said to the grader driver "mate, make it a time so we get out to Waikekeno at midday" because it was low tide. So we got out there at about half past eleven and I went out.



With whanau.

You know it's a funny thing, I've seen this rock before but I 'd never gone there much because I knew there was nothing there because there's no holes. I just happened to go past this rock and I tipped over and hit my hand on this blimbling spiky thing you know? It was a bloody crayfish! The bloody thing must have been that wide (about 8 inches). Yeah I pulled this bloody thing out you know and even the grader driver took off!

Well it was seven pounds. Well I don't know if my uncle Tom's scales were right. I gave it to him and he weighed it. Seven and a half pound it was. That was the biggest crayfish I ever caught.

Commercial fishing, well there's hundreds of them out there. See I don't think it's the guys like you and I who are fishing the sea out, because the guys like you and I were always there! Before the guys fishing for money anyway. Now all we're doing is competing with them.

Bring back the good old days!

Marine protection is everyone's responsibility. You can muck around in the sea for a couple of hours and get about two or three pauas and be glad to get that and be happy and just glad to get that.



My mokos at Waikekeno.

A lot of things have changed...

A lot of things have changed. In my time we'd go out this time of year. Well now when you go there's tons of people out there. Well we went out there it was only us. There wasn't anyone else. Well maybe a week or so before there might have been a family there. But there wasn't anyone there but ourselves.

Pakeha's used to turn their nose up at pauas. Who the hells going to eat that bloody stuff? That's all changed, hasn't it?

We used to share the coast...

They want the whole of the bloody coast nowadays. We used to share the coast. Now we're sort of cornered into our own little spots. With the building of those houses going on at Flat Point and the guy at Waikekeno, he wants to put up a building too. Next thing it will end up like over the hill there, polluted to hell.

Money. It's money isn't it? Things started turning around about 1970 and it changed very quick. Thirty years I'd say. I think people, knowing what the kaimoana is now. The value of it. When they put the dollar on it that killed everything.

You get the likes of me. Our age. I'd be glad to get a paua. Any size. Once upon a time ok I'd look around for the big one. But any paua would do me now. By the time I get down to the water now, over the rocks it'll be high tide again! No I can't get in the water now. I can't yet I used to love diving.

I don't know how you can educate them to leave the smaller ones behind what with the commercial fishermen in the same area and clean the stuff out. It's all right saying you can take so much from here and so much from there. But most people, when they find a place, they'll stay there.

I've got my own thoughts. A rahui over the whole lot! You know if they can wisely pick the places to put a rahui on different places at different times. That might help to protect it.

They say bring back the good old days but that's impossible. I really don't know how you can preserve it other than have a rahui over it. Different areas at different times. I have noticed that if there is a rahui placed on a particular point, no one seems to abuse it.

My question is "is it too late to try and protect what we've got?".

Niniwa Munro

Niniwa Munro – Ngati Hinewaka – was born at Martinborough and brought up at Moiki. Educated at Waipounamu College in Christchurch she studied nursing there before returning to Wairarapa to begin a public service career that included work for the Post Office, Ministry of Works and the Parliamentary Legislative Department.



It always seemed to be a holiday...

Dried shark was our chewing gum when we went to school! We'd just cut a bit off and start chewing. All those sorts of things. Nothing was wasted.

It always seemed to be a holiday, but we always knew that to be on the coast was something special. We didn't worry about shows, about whatever was going on. It was just that being out the coast was really special—being away from the hustle and bustle. But we also knew that we were out there for a reason. To be able to get kaimoana for the winter.

We were very fortunate, my brothers and myself. Being brought up in a much older generation. We were taught from birth these important things. They weren't strict but we were taught to just follow what the kaumatuas do and listen and that's what we did. It didn't matter where we went to; all we did was sit and listen. Never spoke out of turn just listened. You know when you are young you don't think of that but that is the way we were. That's the way the old people were. They were humble people.

They taught us through doing it. It wasn't a matter of sitting down talking about it, we actually went out with the old people. We knew exactly how to tell when the tides were due. When was the best time. Never ever go in at low tide, go in before the low tide. You could actually tell by the low tide as it was going out where the best place to go to get the kai were and today I still do that. We never ever go in when they say the tide is low. We go an hour before. That's the sort of thing that we were taught on that coastline.

Palliser Bay. That's where we stayed...

Palliser Bay. That's where we stayed when I was a kid. The only buildings that were out there were the light house and the old keeper's house. There were a couple of baches under the trees.

A lot of it I learnt from not only my mum but our kuikuia. Living out there. Living and learning about the environment. We took some things when we went out but we lived off the sea. We knew what it was like. What you had to do to fit in. What the old people used to do there. They never had homes like that to live in. We were right there on the beach. We could go out and get kai. We were taught how to preserve pauas. I mean we went out with preserved eggs, done in fat. If we needed eggs or anything like that while we were out there we got seagull eggs. That's what mum used for baking.

Tikanga wasn't strict...

There was no need to take anymore that what was needed for the Winter period because we always went back out the Coast again in August. Tikanga wasn't strict because of the way it was taught but it was something we knew we had to understand. No one ever went out and did otherwise. You went out to the coast for a reason. To get kai. To preserve kai so that you did not have to go out again in the Winter.

Our main times out at the Coast were over the Summer period for paua, crays. Then back for kahawai and food in the bush. We went back out again in August/September and that was to do with karengo. In between we went out to the lake eeling. We never touched the pauas in Winter. The Spring tides would take us back out the coast when every thing was blooming again. It was always done to seasons.

Everything was about how to dry, how to preserve what you caught. How it was preserved so it could be taken back to town. Two weeks, six weeks, it didn't matter.

It was never ever done...

I never ever knew that we took any more than what we were meant to. It was only for what we were going to use at the time and what we were going to be able to preserve. Like te pawhara ne? or preserved pauas. He aha te kupu? Te tahu pauas. That was all that was done. All we took out were the kerosene tins. Mum and the kuikuia always knew that we were going to get a mutton from the lighthouse keeper. So they used the fat off of that. Rendered it down to preserve the kaimoana. And all of this was done on the coastline.

The men usually dived and they only brought up what was needed, that we were going to eat at that time. Or what we were going to preserve like koura mara. That was what was done. I have never ever in my whole life time out on the coast, living out there, going out there every season ever seen crayfish taken in such big numbers as they are today. It was never done.

We could walk around, even when the tide was out and you could see crayfish.

You know, just walking around in the water as kids. And you were so excited when you saw a crayfish! The old people would say "No, waiho". You know that's how it was. You didn't have to go out diving. They just went around the rocks. They would go in feet first under the rocks. You could see them, feet first feeling around with their feet. Then go under and bring up the right size. No, I never saw it done before (the taking of excessive amounts of kaimoana) until I was growing up and saw the numbers coming out. What they are doing now. It was never ever done. Not on that coast. Not by us. Not by the old people. All of it was learning how to economise I suppose. Learning to survive till the next season. Never ever saw great numbers come out at all.

I've seen big omus that we used to have out there that when the crayfish were brought in and I suppose to a child it seemed a lot. The biggest omu that Ngati Hinewaka whanau had was quite huge. But it wasn't excessive. Never filled to the top. It wasn't huge numbers. Same with any kai. It didn't matter what it was. Kai was plentiful. You didn't have to go up and down the coast. We always went to the same place and lived around there. Stayed there, camped there. I don't know, I have never ever seen such large, large numbers taken out as they do now and it's quite sad.

The way we were brought up was to share and to help one another. That's why everyone traveled to the Coast...

But it's different now...

One thing I've noticed that hasn't changed is the size limit (of paua). They've given us a size to work to now. Five inches. In the old, old days the old people used to gauge it from the inside of the thumb to the tip of the index finger. If you get a ruler you will find this is five inches or just over. You didn't need to get out of the water to get a ruler!

But it's different now. It's changed. So many people are wanting paua. We got eight last time didn't we? We got eight and that was plenty. We were quite satisfied. Some say that's not worth it. But it is worth it to us. I felt a lot of paua right out under the rocks but you could tell they were babies. Just have a korero to them and carry on and leave them. It's that sort of thing.

The paua is not there like it was before. We never got wet getting paua. It's sad.



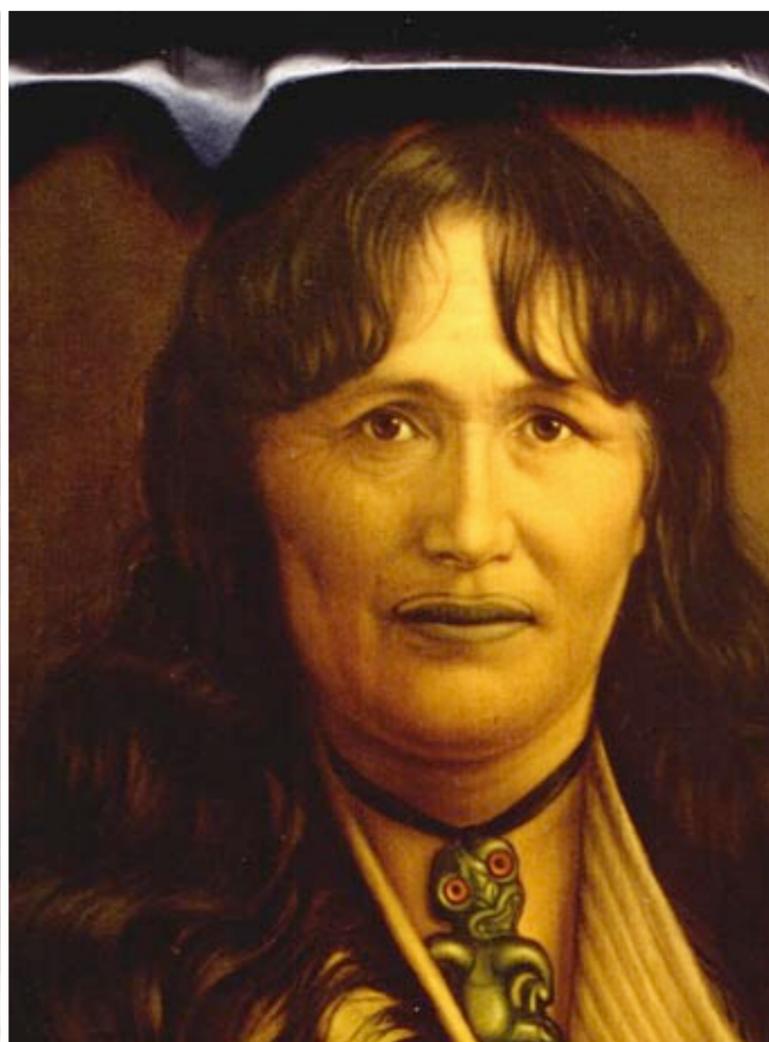
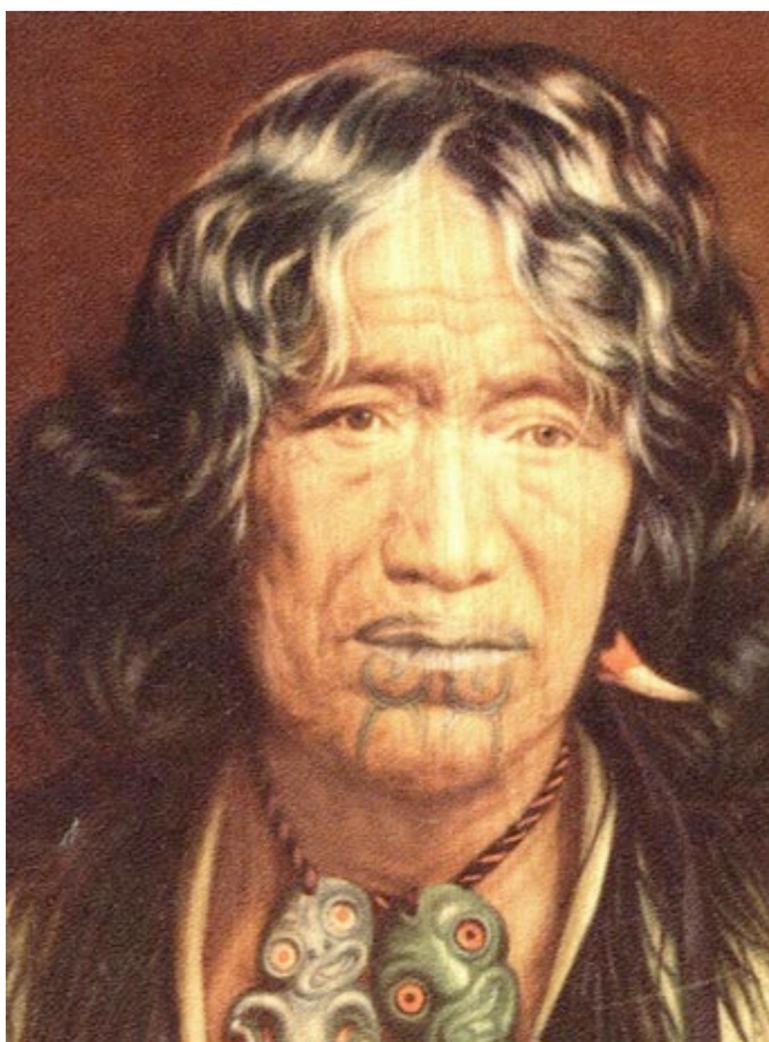
"We were very fortunate..." Left to right: Alf Needham, Te Maihotua Aporo, Niniwa i Te Rangī, Hari Hongi (H.M. Stowell), Mrs Maata Tomuri Te Awa

They call it black gold...

They call it black gold don't they? Which is sad. But still I suppose you know if you call it progress or whatever you'd like to call it but unfortunately it just doesn't suit everyone. I don't think it's only that (Wairarapa) coastline. Most of the coastlines have been ravished. And it's by everyone, everyone. Our Maoris are doing that too. I was absolutely disgusted out at the coast. I was on the verge of using my own status as a kaumatua. I was screaming blue murder but then I nearly got bowled off the road by a four wheel drive right on the corner of where you turn towards the lighthouse. I didn't know them. They were ripping the coast off! Bags and bags of pauas and throwing them into their little blue trailer. I couldn't get their registration number...

I wasn't what you would call a caretaker out there. My mum was. Right up until she died in 1959. But I continued to go out to the coast. I knew exactly where pauas were to be got so we didn't have to get wet. In the sixties when they blasted the rocks at the lighthouse. That's when it opened it up.

Even out at Ngawi it was phenomenal. Just to go out there. You could go in to your waist if you wanted to but you didn't have to dive. But the numbers (of people) out there in the New Year! I just couldn't get over it. And all paua hunters. That's the way it goes. Whether they were there for eating or taking paua for kai for themselves or sharing it with others or whatever. But when you come out with trailer loads, it's not for yourself.



Oku kuia, Te Rangipikinga (left) and Guide Sophie.

There has to be a partnership...

Marine protection, marine reserves. We've got nothing now have we? We've got nothing. There's nothing out there now unless you're a good diver and can get right out in the deep to be able to get kaimoana and unfortunately we, the older ones, can't do that.

Reserves as protection? Taiapures I find quite useless. I think we need some strict "no take" areas. I believe marine protection should be a combined effort. Not entirely DoC or MAF. I believe older people need to be involved, not the younger generation. When we talk about educating people, there are too many people out there who really don't want to listen. Don't want to know. That's how I look at it.

But for the reserves, mataitais, yes, if ever it happens. The taiapure is certainly not working for us along Te Kopi to Hamenga Point. We haven't got the resources

to be able to police that sort of area. It's too big an area. All you can do is sit on the road and watch people doing their thing.

There has to be a big resource there of crayfish and kina. You can't do anything. What does a Trustee mean? What does a Trustee have to do with all that when you're up on top of the cliffs and looking down on it all happening?

I believe that it has to work both ways regardless. Whatever that is needed for us to be able to manage the taiapure and the mataitai I believe there has to be a partnership between the Department (of Conservation) and ourselves to be able to manage it. We should be involved in managing it. But that's the only area that I believe the older people should be involved in. The actual setting up of that partnership.

What's a kaumatua?

I believe the authority given to kaumatua to approve taking of kaimoana should be centralised. What's a kaumatua? Many people ask that today. I believe that it should be centralised with the taiwhenua. Anyone and everyone should get their permits from there. Likewise they and the taiwhenua should be very, very much aware of how it should be managed. Only they would know how many permits had been issued and whereabouts. It should be limited to certain areas at certain times. Not allowing people to go wherever they want to. Those areas should be stipulated.

I believe that a copy of that permit should be followed up by MAF or a person who has been given that responsibility. To make certain that they have got 100 or 50 or should they have that amount. It should be limited by the Taiwhenua. That copy should be

followed up to make certain then brought back to the Taiwhenua to show that is exactly what has happened. That's the only way I see that it can develop and safeguard those areas. But then how many other people go out with out permits? But at least you have got some sort of control on those who are going to respect it for the future.

There's plenty of room for education I reckon!

We, as a family have taught our grandchildren when and where to go to. What to do, what not to do.

There's plenty of room for education I reckon! How do you get that across though? I would say it's too late.

Maybe this is an area where we the kaumatua and grandparents today, we can come together as a people with our grandchildren to find out whether they really do understand how these things should develop for the future.

Educating them at school. What a paua is all about. How it grows. How it came to be a little...whatever. The development of life. Probably be where it all starts from but its sad that it has to go down the track for so long before people see that it's not a gold mine but a food. Likewise, this in itself could be an area of learning for our mokopuna and the generations to come, with the Conservation Department. Together.

Do you think that's one way of learning for the future? Is there ever going to be a future for kaimoana?

Bill Wright

Bill Wright – Ngati Kahungunu/Ngati Toa – was born in Carterton in 1926, raised at Akitio and worked on stations up and down the Wairarapa Coast.



You're fifty years too late!

You're about fifty years too late for the good oil, all the old ones are gone y'know. Dubby and I are the last ones on the coast now and we lived a totally different life to what the old ones did. When we lived back at Akitio the groceries were still coming in on the coastal boats. They used to send 7,000 bales of wool out by ship and the last boat back would bring in the supplies for the winter. I can still remember the chaff sacks full of flour, they must have weighed 150 pounds. We only went to town three times at the most a year.

The old people told you nothing about the sea. They said very little about it. We went and got it and ate it. She was a pretty hard existence out there. It was meat and spuds and what you could catch. They even stopped us eating the pigeons and what have you!

Being at the beach was part of our lives. We went and caught what we wanted and ate it. If others wanted it you'd help them out. They used to have big parties and sing ups out there. The kai was put on and the turkeys were all killed. There's no doubt its gone now though, the kaimoana.

We caught crayfish and paua at about mid calf. We used to have a bit of fun and dive, we were all good divers. In fact women are better divers than men. If they wanted that food, the women, the whole lot of them would put on big thick woolly jerseys and go down into the deep and then they would come up. They would catch these big crayfish and hook them

onto the jersey. They'd just hang there. They would come up with five or six crayfish at a time. The bigger the crayfish the less active they were. Its these little wee ones that we catch now that hurt your hands, those big ones didn't.

They were good old days...

They were good old days. Of course the campers would come out in the Summer time. I remember as a kid getting 10 shillings for a sugar sack full of crayfish. You'd only have about four to a bag, they were that big. The workers were only getting 10 shillings a week.

Commercial activity on the coast has only come in in the last 40years. People would come out and get a few crays. Well, they'd always chuck you some money for them but that wasn't selling them, that was only a gift really because they were getting something.

In them times you didn't ask a farmer if you could walk on. It was just through the gate and away you went. These days the gates are locked aren't they?

They were good old days. We used to say that if your mother was getting you ready to take you to town she used to have to catch us kids and chain you to a stump and run round and round you with a wheel barrow to get you used to a wheel! Those old bullock dray wheels never turned very fast!

Maori protocol on the coast...

There was a Maori protocol on the coast. If you turned a rock up you turned it back down the same way. There was little rules and regulations like that, the bulk of them forgotten, but you always remembered that if you turned a big rock over you turned it back. Took what you wanted then put it back. We were told. We got a belt under the bloody ear if we didn't listen! It's hard to remember them all now. We never ate anything on the beach. We took it away.

People used to come, Maori and Pakeha came out in droves in the Summer time from Dannevirke in the old rag top cars y'know? They were taking kai home. None of it was wasted but they might have 15 bags of crayfish, fifteen bags of paua. They'd come out and catch and cart it away. I get a bit annoyed now when I hear Maori saying "we only caught what we needed". They were no different to the Pakeha. They went out and if it was easy to get they caught it.

One time there used to be scrubcutters down the front of Moanaroa and I took the mail down. They were just starting dinner. They had

twenty sacks of kinas between five of them. They weren't wasted.

We used to take pack horses. When I think back, I was heading home for Xmas and I got to Weber Hotel and called in and there was another Maori contractor come in and said "I've got two days left at Marahanga so I got the call to get up and go and shear. Lunch time he said "you're finished for the day". I thought "lovely, I could be home". "Oh" he said "the managers got the pack horses ready, you can go diving up the Arcade". Up the front of Akitio Station that was. I said "I've been shearing all year, my hands are soft", he said "Oh there's a couple of lout boys here, you tell them what to do and punch them if they don't do it". We came home with five pack horses bending at the knees. Course they were going back to Dannevirke.

Even when I lived at Pongoroa with a big shearing crew. We'd fill the truck up. Come back and drop her in the middle of Pongoroa and everyone would help themselves. No one thought that they would ever start to run out or anything.

For us living on the coast seafood was part of our lives. If the crayfish were in, you were so sick of eating meat and spuds you went and got them, mussels and all that.

There were times when there were no fish there at all. They'd gone out to sea or wherever they went. The bulk of them used to work on the Maori calendar. You never see or hear of it now. It was the same with the gardening. It was the Maori calendar.

I wasn't very high then...

The big lot of Maori used to live at Akitio in the pa there. The old man was a kaumatua for the Owahanga ones and they had all the drying racks for fish. The big eel frames were in the river all the time. I remember going over, I wasn't very high, he just slung me on the front of his saddle and I went over with him. I always remember the stink of these bloody fish as they dried them out in the sun.

That was down the pa at Owahanga. Owahanga was leased until 1931. Native Maori Affairs took it back in 1931 and run it. Well I'm not too sure but my father said that there were about 500 Maori living there then – up and down the coast.



"They used to send 7,000 bales out by ship."

There's a massive groper reef out there off Akitio. Dad said "These old Maoris used to go up and find a totara somewhere up the river. Struck with lightning or something and died. They'd go hollow out the rot in the centre and he said they'd light it hoping it would hollow out and they would get a canoe. These big totaras would wash down then they'd split them, then just point both ends so it would pierce the water a bit". Now that hapuka reef is 5 miles out and he said they'd paddle out on an early outgoing tide in the morning and they'd catch a heap of groper and tie them on to their boat and then paddle back in. Dad said it was bloody awful. They'd have their legs hanging over each side with bloody great sharks following and he said they'd just paddle on!



The old homestead, Akitio.

The East Coast is good all the way, Tora and all the way up. The other thing is that there's not that sort of kai over on the West coast. You see you've got this kai trail through Hamua. Another one came over the Tararua's out here. They'd come over, following the rivers out because they'd have food all the way but they'd bring their kai and exchange it here. Go out in the Autumn when the crayfish were dried out. So that would take a massive heap. Imagine a tribe coming over and carting back as much as they could carry!

It amuses me nowadays how they talk about maraes, pas and all this. Well as my father said "They had their shelters, if the pigeons were right they went inland. If the crayfish were right they were back on the front. His meaning of it is that they had their little pas and they lived there until they had to move on. They had these shelters and I suppose they would go back and chuck a few ferns on. That was the old days. They were hard. My father was born in 1884.

It's been going on all the time...

Them days the kahawai when they run the sea would be black. Then they would come up the river. You could pretty near walk across the river on them. When they were like that you could catch them and smoke them. All that's gone now. Last year they said they had a run of kahawai out there. I said "was the sea all black?". They said "oh no there was only little thin strips. Well, in the old days from behind the breakers right out to sea would be black as far as you could see.

Last time I was out Akitio, I got up at midnight and the bloody fishing boats were in behind the breakers!

Akitio was lit up like you were driving into Wellington but come morning there wasn't a boat in sight.

It's always gone on. I've shorn all up and down the coast. I remember shearing at Tora when one of them went out for a piss and came in yelling "come and look at this". The lights were on and here were all these Italians. This was in the mid 1940s. They weren't supposed to be in there but they came in at midnight. It's been going on all the time.

We're fighting for our Maori quota...

I think the Government's making too much out of quota. They've got to start getting their act together. We're fighting for our Maori quota and we can't

bloody get it but they're making too much money out of it.

I think as far as this Maori quota is concerned, we're never going to get it. It's been going since 1991 but we still haven't got it. The only spare quota that's sitting down in Wellington is Maori quota. They went around New Zealand in 1978 and took 20% off all the fisherman and sent half of them broke didn't they? Called it

Maori quota. See now if I walk down the street here they say "geez Maoris get all the bloody money!" All we want is the quota to get our money.

Marine protection – everyone's a vandal...

If you go out to Akitio or anywhere down the coast, there's 300 to 500 boats sitting there over Xmas and New Year. All got craypots and they drop them in and they're long lining and netting. You know you think back when the Pakeha who liked crayfish would have one feed a year while he's out there. Now you've got a big flash car you can go out every weekend the tides right. That's the big killer I think, it's the amount that are out fishing.

The bulk of people who go out fishing are doing it for themselves and their friends. The bulk of them are fairly careful. We know we've got those vandals. They say it's the Asians, but there's Maoris and Pakehas. Everyone's a vandal if he thinks he can get away with it.

It's attitudes...

The coast used to get hit hard at times but then there'd be long rest periods. But now you see they're fishing all the year round aren't they? They even go out in mid winter.

It's attitudes. The Maori's got his attitudes, the Pakeha's got two or three attitudes and quite a few Pakeha run with Maori on the subject. But marine reserves have to come, they have to. Maybe just for seeding. Let the paua build up and shift them on. Same with the kina. The crayfish, well you can't do much about them. They do their own thing. The paua do too.

You think back to the old reef in front of where the old landing shed is. Someone said they wanted to make it into a reserve. Well I would hate to see that go into reserve. That is learning, for kids, women everyone. I spent all my young life catching little fish and crabs there. It would be a shocking shame if that went to reserve.

There's plenty of little basins down the front of the stations that should go into reserves. There's no doubt Akitio has been skinned out. There's still a few little rocks where you can get a feed.

Marine protection and reserves has to come. It has to be governed. You've got to have marine reserves and they have to be governed. I know for a fact from Napier north going up the coast they reckon even the coloured stones are gone from the bottom of the streams and there is not a mussel, a pipi or a bloody paua left. Y'know that's from Ahuriri north for as far as you can see. Well we don't want that to happen all the way down.

Somehow or other we have to put these reserves in and we need to put them where they are a bit hard to get at. See you don't want to be able to drive to the beach and have a reserve sitting right in front of you. You want to use the sea too, even for a paddle or a swim. We've got massive beach fronts out there so there's plenty of room.

The Government has got to come in strong and fast too. Start putting those reserves in. It makes you wonder how we are going to make it work. Put a reserve there and a signpost beside it. Half a dozen sneak in, in the middle of the night and clean a half out. It's got to be governed 24 hours a day. You can go down after dark and catch all the crayfish you want. They sit there very calm you can catch them easier in the dark than you can in the daylight.

Maori need to start talking about how they are going to protect the kai moana. How to do it and how to stop all these ones who arrive at the beach mad keen for a feed of kai moana. That's the thing, there needs to be more discussion on marine reserves. Everywhere you go its "Oh no shut up, don't start that bloody rot". But it's (marine reserves) got to be done as far as I can see.

Jock Perry

“From Orongorongo right up to Porangahau is the biggest area I know of for seafood. Its been flogged a bit now though hasn't it?” – Jock Perry

Jock Perry was born at Tinui in 1921 and farmed in the Tinui Valley. Here he talks about the coast his grandfather, John Alfred Perry knew in the 1840s and 1850s prior to the big earthquake of 1855 and shares his thoughts on marine protection.



“I was born out the coast...”

I was born out the coast. I've been there all my life until I came into town here. My old grandfather, he came from the Isle of Wight in England. He was a ships carpenter on the sailing ships, apprenticed from when he was 13. They took them young in those days!. He did two trips to Canada with immigrants from Scotland. Then he came to Wellington with some more Scots people. He came to Castlepoint in 1841 with Guthrie who bought the Castlepoint land off of the Rangitane Chief Wereta I think it was. Wereta used to live down by the Whareama River. He had crops down there on some hundred acres of flat that was there before the earthquakes pushed all the land up.

My old grandfather was taking stuff around on a 34 ton vessel, the Sarah Jane. Wellington to Napier and Kaikoura. He used to be able to sail up the Whareama river and go straight in right up to where the Whareama hall is because the water was that much higher than it is now. But once the 1855 earthquake came along that bugged it up all together. It got too low. The land came up nine feet in one jolt!

Grandfather was travelling up and down the coast until 1845 when he came to help Guthrie with the land at Castlepoint. His boat got wrecked at Uruti in the finish. He was heading to Kaikoura with a load of grog and flour and sugar, all the stuff that you need, when he got into a real Wahine storm in the Cook Strait and they got shoved right back to Uruti. He had no sails left and all he could do was just steer it with the rudder. He managed to see the little hill at Uruti sticking out of the trees and so he aimed for there. At that stage it was 1847, before the earthquakes so it was deeper close in. The boats still there under the sand, should still be all right because it's a kauri built thing. You'd need a detector to find where it is though.

In the old days they used to walk up and down the Coast. My Grandfather would take 3 days to walk to Wellington staying with local Chiefs on the way. When he got to Te Wharepouri's pa at Eastbourne they would take him across to Wellington.

Grandfather worked for Guthrie from 1845 until 1863 when he got 120 acres opposite the Tinui station. He was born in 1830 something and died in 1926.

When I was a kid...

When I was a kid we lived about 8 miles from the Coast. The old man had one of those Model Ts with a brass radiator. There was no road up Mataikona then, you could only drive to Whakataki or Castlepoint. It wasn't until 1939 that they started the road to Mataikona.

I remember coming down with my old man after the big storm of 1937 left hundreds of crayfish stranded on the beach. We'd come down to check the road and there they were laid out like boulders, all these crayfish!. People filled chaff sacks with them. We took some and shared them out with others along the coast. That's what people did in those days, they didn't just think of themselves.

When I left school the slump came on and I said to the old man “I'm going to get a job”. He had five kids and enough to do feeding them. I was only 13 but that was the way it was. I had to go all the way to Porangahau to get a job. No one around here had any money! So I went up there and got sixteen shillings a week. Thought I was bloody made I suppose.



Marae Mataikona pre 1940. Photo courtesy of Jock Perry.

At the beach...

We used to go to Castlepoint when I was kid. The people didn't do half the things they do today. They respected the sea. They used it as a food source but they'd go bloody mad if anyone abused it. That's what we need now, we need to realise that it is a food source and we need to look after it instead of abusing it, robbing it. Even out in the deep. Most of them can get out there with all the gear that they have now. We don't know what's going on out there.

I know inland near the shore, the damage that's being done by people in the holiday times. Some of them don't even know what size to take. If we catch them we tell them off and put them back.

Most of the people in the old days were very good. They only took what they needed. But the sea food source then was just immense because it hadn't been damaged. The Maori people who used to come there, they used to foster the whole area. They used to take stock from one area and move it to another. Paua take a very long time to grow so they used to manage them carefully. They were gardening the paua beds.

People used to dry the seafood in the old days. They would come out to the coast and camp. Inland Maori would come out to camp for two or three months at a time under the karaka trees. Everywhere they camped they planted the karaka trees. When the grader goes along the coast roads you can still see all their old middens with the black stones sticking out of the bank.



Hongi's Bay Mataikona showing karaka.

In the old days there were Maori reserves all along the coast. Traditional places for camping and fishing. The Government took them away for defence purposes during the Second World War and never returned them. Something should be done about that.

There were more people living out the coast in those days. People within 9 or 10 miles would go to the coast every two or three months mainly for the kids sake or if a group wanted to go fishing. They used to fish from the shore or the Castle Rock. They caught mostly snapper and hapuku. Those days you could catch hapuku of up to 120 pounds off the top of the rock.

There was commercial fishing at Castlepoint when I was young. Just one joker with a big winch to haul his boat up where the church is now. There was nothing much at Castlepoint. A store and a lighthouse I think. A lot of people used to come on day trips from Masterton but there were no baches or anything. The kids would run around on the beach and by jingos they used to catch some fish in those days, big snappers! We used to take some home and drop it off to our neighbours on the way.

The kids used to catch kahawai and herrings. When I was five, that's seventy six years ago, they used to go in and out from Castlepoint to Masterton in a day. They had a stage coach and every 7 miles they had fresh horses. They'd be galloping four horses all the way through the mud and bush.

The principles of marine protection

Of course they used to have these old canvas signs on the sides of the roads up here (at Mataikona) about the principles of marine protection but the visitors wrecked the bloody things. Most of the locals know about what to do or they bloody well should know! The principles are the principle things that you do when you are taking food away from an area. You don't leave rocks turned over when you are gathering paua, you turn them over the right way again. How many to take, what size, all the important things.

People have to be taught to respect the sea somehow. The only way you can teach them is to force them to take note. A lot of people have never been taught to respect a notice. You put a bloody notice up and it just infuriates them.

We were told what to do and what not to do when we went to the sea. We used to talk about those things at school. The teacher used to talk to us about marine life. We had a Mrs Savage, a Maori lady who used to come over once a week and talk to the kids at Tinui school. She would teach them how to do flax work and what you can find at the seaside, what you should do, how many you take and all of that. If you went out diving you would pick a bit more to drop off at other people's places on the way home. Everyone thought of everyone else, especially old people and sick people. Now they don't.

Frances Reiri Smith

Frances Reiri Smith – Ngai Taneroa, Kaiparuparu, Te Hina – Ariki, Ngati Muretu has worked for the Ministry of Education and currently works at the Masterton District Library as their Poutakawaenga a rohe.



I was brought up at Hurunuiorangi...

I was brought up at Hurunuiorangi. I must have been about five when we moved to Gladstone. Dad was away labouring and working on the stations. I was twelve before we came to Te Whiti. Our house was built there in 1951.

I can remember getting worms for the koros and threading them on to whitau and going bobbing. It was all eeling around the little Taueru river and the creeks that ran off the Ruamahunga around Gladstone there. Of course we had a creek right behind us at Gladstone. We used to feed the eels until a certain time then we were allowed to go out and fish them.

We'd camp out the coast...

Then of course there were the big hikes, right out to the coast. Staying out there, going out there on the back of the old truck and what have you. Out to Glenburn. But we would stay out there and come back through to Uriti. When there were big hui on we would go to Tora. We were part of a group of families that used to go on big hikes out to the coast.

If it was Dad's family we'd all go to the beach together or if it was Mum's people we would all do the same too. If it was the Gladstone community, people from Waipopo we'd go down to Tora. Sometimes we'd go to Flat Point but on the whole if it was a big trip we'd go further afield down to Hinakura and Tora. These patterns of trips continued after I returned from Hukarere College where I was boarding.

We'd camp out the coast. Often we'd camp out the coast. We had this thing because our household was

between Te Whiti and Hurunuiorangi that whoever came past from the coast would turn right and serve the Te Whiti whanau or left and the kai would go up to Hurunuiorangi. They used to have bets when they saw us come down the hill whether we would turn right or left!

It was a whole family get up and go...

It was more for the boys in our family on most occasions. But it was a whole family get up and go as well. We'd all go as a family and pitch tents. For our day to day living it was fishing and eeling. Koura was our main stay. Over the summer months there was mutton and beef but on the whole it was the fish that we caught and dried out that sustained us.

The men dived for koura. Later in my life they had other methods but on the whole it was diving with inner tubes. We didn't have many cars when I was growing up so they were a precious commodity those inner tubes even bicycle inner tubes were used with a sack loosely strung around it and tied to the person.

Some of our women were great swimmers. They could go down to great depths and come up with koura. We never ever had those lovely wet suits and things like you see around nowadays. Now it seems stupid, how some of it was, but people used to wear shearing pants, jackie howes and uncle Tom Namana used to be a great one to ensure that their backs were warm. I think now how heavy those clothes must have been! How they must have held people down. Our womenfolk would tie their skirts until they had pants that they could swim in. They would always take a dry set of clothes so they could come back and jump into the creeks and have a wash off.

You know I can't ever remember any of those korouas of that time nor any of Dad's family, my uncles having any problems after being out in the sea. They'd get out, wash then come back on those trucks up over the hills, everybody singing and the kids falling off to sleep. They were neat fun times!

We never ever questioned...

The kaimoana was different (from the freshwater fishing). There was a lot of tapu placed on it. Things that we took for granted. We never ever questioned why there was a rahui placed. We just accepted it. We knew what we had to do as women when maturity came on. Why our nannies or aunties weren't allowed out in the sea. We were pushed out there to get things and hold bags and were terrified. I always wondered why they didn't come down, but it wasn't until we were 10,11,12 before we fully understood the reasons behind it. As puberty was reached these things were explained but up until that time that was our job, to carry the sacks, follow our elders, our dads and uncles around holding their sacks and sitting on the rocks and waiting for them to throw the kinas and the pauas and what have you up to us. Running back to get the boys to come down and help carry the things up. It was all part and parcel of it.



Frances and kids, early 1970s.

August September were the months for collecting karengo. The wettest months. There were certain parts we were able to take karengo from and other parts we weren't. I realise now that the pupus had a lot of significance in where karengo was going to be or wasn't going to be. It was my sisters and cousins, females on our side that had to turn the karengo over for drying and would have cleaned it totally by the time the men would have brought there catches in. We cleaned it by shaking off as much sand as we could in the water then coming back and tearing it into small pieces. We then used chicken netting to spread it out on then fill the flour bags. We used to make a lot of fun of it, who could fill their flour bags quickest so that we had competitions between homes. Something that you don't see much of now.

Even drying paua. We were never allowed to shell them at the beach. We brought our paua back and then shelled them at the first bridge when coming out of Glenburn. We used to sit there. Mum would have the kai all set up under the trees and we would be down at that creek shucking paua. I can't ever remember being told to walk back and take undersize paua back to the coast. The holes were made in the paua ready to string them up and by the time we left there the whitau would have been stripped. If there wasn't harakeke about the ti kouka tree leaves were used to string up the paua. We didn't always have proper string. String was a commodity, a luxury.

I can't ever recall us not having kai of one sort or another. We really had certain places that we went to. We knew who was the last person to camp there and they would leave firewood, driftwood there for the next people. They never came away without leaving some wood or stones there ready. We would clean out all the ashes which were taken back to the creek or used in other ways.

We knew our quota...

We knew our quota and we knew exactly where they would be preserved in the house. Those were winter kai. Kina was a novelty. Koura. There was pockets of eggs under the tails of the females and you got a clip under the ear if there were too many of those in your basket! Although it was done jokingly, those were part of the tapu things associated with kaimoana.

Whenever our people would go to the sea they would only take the amounts that was necessary for the whanau, for the whole of the Hurunuiorangi. The men would dish it out. There would be things hanging and drying. In the off seasons there would be eels dried out and in the summer months there would have been paua and octopus also dried out and we'd chew on those as kids through the winter months.

That was the respect that we gave to those areas...

I think my family had land out the coast. They would often talk about where people were buried. Some of it had to do with employment on Glenburn and Hinakura away down the coast. I don't know how they did it but they used to get from one place to the next on horse back. It takes a couple of hours now but it must have taken them ages. They would have kai and drop off a bit to every household as they came past.

We knew who all the different whanau were up and down the coast. We all knew each others beach and creek sites and we were always told never to abuse another persons locality

Glenburn was definitely the spot for us and our people would tell all sorts of stories on our way out there. We think that the people of Tumapuhiarangi have Homewood. Uncle Dubby and his people are the ones from the top end and of course Uncle Bill and his people at Taueru had the rights to Castlepoint. That was the respect that we gave to those areas. If we ever went to Riversdale or Castlepoint it was more for leisure than for kaimoana. Of course we never went to the beach just to sunbathe. It was always to get the kaimoana. But it was a fun thing rather than being there for a full catch to feed the whanau back home.

Uncle Ike Rutene and Dad's family were mostly Ratana and they would never go to Ratana without kai and we were the ones with the kaimoana from the East coast here. So the best of the pickings would be held for these sorts of hui. These things would be held and taken to Ratana for the 25th of January.

It was not like today when we get signatures to go and get kaimoana. But then there were certain kaumatua living out the coast and anyone going out from Masterton had to drive past their front door.

Those were really neat times!

Women had a real role in preserving the kai moana, and making traps, hinaki for eels and koura. These were made from supple jack and manuka from the bush. They were soaked in the creek and moulded into shape then baited with possums or sheeps heads.

The koura ones for the sea had particular ways of being made as the inner was plaited by weaving it around your foot then removing your foot and attaching the inner to the inside of the hinaki. There was always jokes about whose foot was to be left in for bait! All these traps were tied to the top of the loads on the back of the trucks. What with all the kids we must have looked a real sight going over those hills and coming back! Those were really neat times!



Kaumatua trip, early 1970s.

Rahui

On the coast where there is depletion of species a rahui should be put in place for protecting the species and their growth in those areas. Anywhere that we are going to be able to retain a right for our people. Iwi need to be able to place moratorium for specific periods throughout the year. It could be made by a selection of people.

As hapu we should gazette our boundary areas and we need input into commercial fishing.

In the old days we talked about these things...

I think marine protection is the responsibility of all people. More specifically it is the Government assisting the local folk and I don't mean just the local people who live on the coast but those who have whakapapa to land or areas around the coast there. The decisions need to be made together, united. Expertise and knowledge from fisherman in the area and the knowledge from the whanau is needed. It's hard because I think we all do have a major responsibility.

In the old days we talked about these things. It took us longer to get to these places. It took us longer to get back. So we talked about all these things.

Education is important but how is it suppose to happen today if we don't have those people who have that knowledge to pass it on? Its such experiences as this recording that can do it. We are only 14 percent of the population here so we are pretty limited in each age grouping too. We need ongoing dialogue with the people, libraries and schools.

Put another paua on the barbie!

Throwing pauas straight up onto the pan! So we now have a feed out there and then come on back in. We never used to do this. I don't know if this is because you only have so much to bring back. That you have a feed before you come back. It was an inherent

thing that what you caught you brought back and you shared amongst others. Now the restriction is that you only get 10 per person so you make a day of it. So where have we gone wrong?

When we get to the stage where we don't need to be checked because you can trust people. My daughter took out a whole group of people from across the other side. In her mihi she said "we might have to blind fold you before we take you to our (diving) spots so your coussies can't come back over here!". While it was facetious, this is what we have done to ourselves.

Carol Fox

Takitimu te waka, Ngati Kahungunu te iwi, Tararua te maunga, Ruamahunga te awa, Ngai Tumapuhia a rangi te hapu, Te Ore Ore te marae.

Manahi Meihana (Mason) me Hinerau Wharangi oku matua, Carol Fox toku ingoa.

Carol Fox (née Mason) was raised at Okautete (Homewood). Here she talks about life on the beach in those days with her husband Ben and daughter Tania Blundell.



It was all whanau...

The first time I went to the coast that I can remember I would have been about seven or eight. In those days the whole village used to go to the beach at certain times. Sleep there to gather the kai, enough for the winter season. That was out at Uruti. We didn't go anywhere else, only Uruti. That was 1950, when I was seven. I can recall us going as families. The whole village used to all go down together.

There was so much kai we used to go straight off the front. Not way down the beach as we do now. Sometimes though two or three of us kids had to drag big bags of pauas back from the point. All the way round from the point. There were no motorbikes then. Well, they were around but no one had one. We'd be all pulling and pushing, all the kids. It was awesome. All our cousins were there and uncles and aunts.

When they got crayfish in our day well, you don't get crayfish now from where we got them. They were monsters. It might be because we were kids that they looked like monsters but perhaps not because I can remember the size of the legs, they were that big. The crayfish you get today, we never saw those, we never even saw them at such a small size.

Everybody dived. When I was about ten, just in our own family I used to have to dive with the brothers. So then our Dad would line us all up and say "get in the hole", say where the crayfish were.

There were crayfish holes all along the ledges. So you went in, cleaned them out and moved along. But they were always full when you came back. See that's how we did it ay? We only went at one season. We didn't go back again until the next proper time. So they took enough out and dried them. Enough to last through the winter. That was the crayfish the pauas whatever, starfish, pupus, ngakahi. They rotted the crayfish though, in the water. Have you eaten rotten crayfish?

We used to all live there for two or three days, usually at weekends so that we would have kai from the sea as well. Kind of like how we do camping now. It was all whanau.

Uruti is the only place you can crab and get them in one hit at low tide. On the other beaches the rocks are not flat like Uruti. I've never known of anywhere else to crab like how we crab. Do you know how we crab? When the tide comes in we chase them on the rocks. We used to have kerosene tins then.

They were for the crabs to go in and we had Tilley lamps, kerosene lamps. They were for crabbing at night. As the waves came in all the crabs would come in and run along. They would scatter and you could just pick them up. The kids love it. The best time to go is between November and February. They're fattest around that time. You need to strike a tide right on dark.

We weren't brought up with the rituals. We were taught don't turn your back to the sea and don't go alone. We never really had karakia like we do as a family (now). We didn't have that as kids. But we were taught the important things. Things about how you are not allowed to eat on the sea. We had to wait until everyone got back. Now, hey! People will go there get the paua and eat it straight away. Even about the karengo. We were taught to do it with our hands.



Our mokes at Uruti today.

Everyone shared...

Karengo, in our day remember? We used to come home with sacks and sacks. Very seldom you get it like that now. They used to make these big long wire netting tables to dry the karengo out. It was the kids job to turn it every night. If it rained they had sacks. Big thick sacks to cover it.

In those days the weather wasn't like this. You knew when it was going to rain. You could predict it all. So you were prepared. I remember we used to do all our eating while we were staying there so that what we took home was all stores. Tahu pauas as well as tahu meat. We used to put it in either beef fat or pork fat.

They were the only fats that they used. You have got to do it properly ay? You have to make sure all the water is out. When you tahu them there is a certain amount of water there so you have to keep cooking them until all the water is out. Ooh that was yummy! Probably not the best nutrition today. Yummy in those days!

They went fishing at another time to get the shark and dry it. They'd strip them and salt them and hang them. I think we had more seafood on our washing lines than clothes!

There were lots of eels out there but I don't recall us ever catching them. They were so easy to get. You could just go down the river. Kids did those jobs. Not parents. And they were big eels. They weren't what you get today. When there were eels, they were done properly too. Preserved.

I don't even recall all the Pakehas out there going to the beach. Because I think the Maoris used to just give them their bit! Everybody got the kai for all those who couldn't get there. You just shared it along the way.

The Morrises, the Akuiras, the Masons, the Pakus and the Waakas. They were big, big families. We were the main families there. That was the village. It was good y'know because in those days if you didn't have a butter, you'd just get on the horse and go to the next farm and just keep going until you got it!

But no one went without. We were whanau. Just like one big family and everyone shared. The Akuiras had the shearing contract and a truck. So when we went to the beach we all got on the truck.

We were never allowed to go to the beach on our own. Our kids obeyed that. Uruti was the main beach for us although just below our place was a pipi point, so we used to walk down there. There are other beaches the other way. We were never allowed to go there. I don't really know why. But we knew we were not allowed to go. Must have been tapu. I think there were some pa sites down there.

That's another thing, we were never allowed to have a mimi down by the sea. There were designated spots for that. We had a couple of long drops. That was part of what we had to do. Clean up the long drops. Uncle used to make all sorts of whare paku. From a plastic bag to a drum with a seat.

We had everything...

We had everything. I reckon we were better off out there than when we moved to town. Wild pork, animals everywhere. Rongoa, the ngaio tree down the road for any scabby legs, cobwebs for the bleeding and sea water for the sores. We had everything. You name it we had it. Pigs, deer, rabbits. It was all around us. Everything belonged to everyone. We never heard of any mate Maori in those days.

Any wedding or big do they would go and get kaimoana. It was organised by David Morris's grandfather. He was the kaumatua. The only one that practiced those sort of things.

I remember Uruti. You would walk along the rocks and look in the water and see the pauas sitting there. We weren't allowed to take the pauas right inshore. We had to go right into the water.

There were some landmarks in the sea. Paddy used to tell us "if you can see that you've got a good tide". Can't do it today. Hardly goes out. Especially at Uruti. Hard to get a good tide there.

Our families from out there are familiar with everything along there. Our mokos today do what we did when we were kids. When we go now we take other people so that they can have the experience that we had. People just get blown away. It's that togetherness thing. Bringing everyone together.

If you think about our families today and how a lot of them are disoriented. I reckon some of the things that kept us all together were what our generation did for us. So we haven't lost those values. But you can see the families that have lost those values or didn't know them, especially urban families.

When you think about it. Today's society has to be taught all of those things. If you think about when our people used to go fishing. They looked at the moon and when it was midnight, moonlight or mid day tide they knew that was a good time for fishing or gathering kai.



"Today's society has to be taught all of those things."

Glossary

Hinaki – Eel trap.

Hua – Intestines/entrails.

Jackie Howe – Black woollen singlet.

Kaimoana – Food from the sea.

Karengo – An edible seaweed.

Kaumatua – Elder.

Kina – Sea urchin/sea egg.

Koro/koroua – Grandfather/male elder.

Koura – Crayfish.

Kui/kuikuia – Grandmother/female elder.

Mataitai – (modern context) Fishing reserve where tangata whenua manage all non commercial fishing. Generally no commercial fishing allowed.

Mokopuna/mokos – Grandchildren.

Ngakahi – Shellfish.

Omu – Iron cooking vessel/camp oven.

Pawhara – Method of preserving food through drying/salting.

Pupu – Cats eye, a shellfish.

Rahui – Maori ban on entering the sea, fishing or gathering kaimoana from a specified area.

Tahu – Preserve in fat.

Taiapure – (modern context) Fishing reserve based in areas of historical importance to Maori. Administered by a management committee.

Taiwhenua – Regional Maori representative organisation.

Ti kouka – Cabbage tree

Waiho – Leave it!

Whakapapa – Genealogy

Whanau – Family.

Whitau – String made from flax fibre used for threading shellfish for drying.