Mana Whenua Values and Narrative

Central Otago Destination Plan

Kupu Whakaari / Introduction

This document summarises values and narratives identified by the Aukaha Mana Whenua Panel in relation to the Central Otago Destination Plan, for the Central Otago District Council.

These cultural values should be treated as pre-liminary and applicable to this project alone. As such they are not to be used for external publication without the approval of Aukaha, who have prepared this document alongside, and on behalf of, Mana Whenua.

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This acknowledges the Wai 262 claim which addresses the ownership and use of Maori knowledge, cultural expressions, indigenous species of flora and fauna, all known as taonga (treasures), and inventions and products derived from indigenous flora and fauna and/or utilising Maori knowledge.

Values

These are some key values in relation to this project;

Whakapapa

Whakapapa is the foundation from which everything is explained and connected in our Māori world. Whakapapa explains the existence and connection between everything including all inanimate and animate objects. Whakapapa cements the ancient connection from the Pacific and in to Te Waipounamu as people settled the South Island and generations occupied the land and waterways. Whakapapa is the connection between layers of generations but also the linkage between mana whenua and celestial life and it is kinship, pivotel to identity.

Mana

Mana is loosely understood as prestige, however it is a layered and complex value. With mana comes ownership and responsibility which is earned through deeds and behaviours and this is reflected in our tribal narrative and whakapapa. Furthermore, mana also refers to the longstanding occupation and our tribal authority across the larger area of Te Waipounamu which goes far beyond the modern day boundaries and marae.

Tapu

Tapu evades every aspect of the Māori world. In the past this restriction determined all aspects of daily life. Examples of tapu are in the actual sites known as Wāhi Tapu which include, urupā; past urupā, burial sites, modern urupā; places of particular events such as battles, or places of death, places of birth; Building sites such as past villages; Places where there were once alters and of a religious nature. There are many more however and these must be observed and considered with mana whenua guidance and advice. Tapu is also about restriction which provides an element of safety for people.

Mauri

Mauri is generally defined as life force but it is a complex value to explain. It is noted that all things have a life force and as an example, the pollution of rivers disrupts their mauri. Mauri can be restored if it has been disrupted oraffected. An example in the Central Otago area that is currently under research is the germination of kōwhai seeds that have been buried for hundreds of years. This is symbolic of restoring mauri and also reinstates narratives.

Mātauraka

Mātauraka is adaptive knowledge that has developed over many generations from the wider Pacific to Te Waipounamu. Mana whenua had skills in every area of life, as scientists, astrologers, ecologists, engineers, geologists, and so forth which ensured

survival in harsh climates and confronting elements, enabling them to travel efficiently and settle the land. Mātauraka developed and adapted over time and was handed down through generations and is ongoing.

Whakawhanaukataka

This value encompasses wide ranging relationships and interrelationships that have evolved within the Central Otago Region.

Whakariteka

This practice is about preparation and was pivotal to Kāi Tahu life in the pre-contact period and now into the modern day. The environment was such that Māori were prepared to gather kai and prepare it for various seasons. The travel also required preparation for arduous journeys and settlement across the land.

Maumaharataka

Māori recollections of the past and narratives are important. Maumaharataka includes those direct memories from mana whenua, those who have first-hand experiences of growing up with their whanauka and within their traditional kāika. It also includes those who have heard stories and narratives from others about their whānau, hapū and iwi. It is important that the narratives and whakapapa surrounding these are authentic as possible with actual experiences where possible. Furthermore, Kāi Tahu have a breadth of written historical information in te reo Māori and English, some of which sits in private collections and other in repositories such as the Hocken Library. This information is valuable in relaying the authentic narrative of Kāi Tahu. The Kāi Tahu voice cannot be ignored. It is in the landscape in place-names, in the memories of our people, whakapapa, written archives, recordings and so forth.

Whakamanuhiritaka

This is the practice of welcoming and being a good host to visitors but includes the responsibilities of each party within this exchange. There is mana in receiving visitors and being hospitable. Sharing kai is an important aspect of this value

Ka hua o te tau

The seasons of the year in te ao Māori are a critical aspect of life. In Central Otago today, those seasons are clearly obvious to the visitor in the landscape and the colour of flora. The extreme change in weather from season to season also effected the way in which Māori travelled and engaged with the land and waterways.

Utu

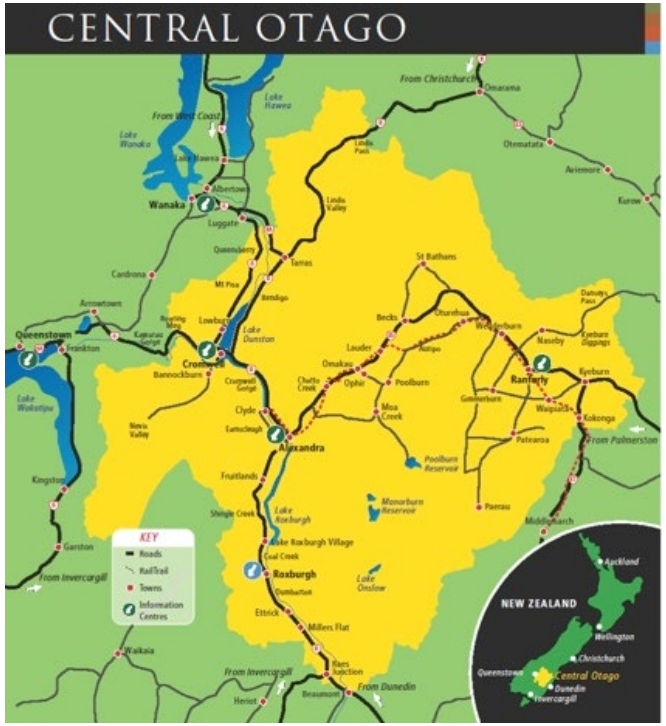
Utu has connotations of revenge however the intent is as the Williams dictionary has defined it; Return for anything, satisfaction, reward, price, reply. Therefore, utu more strongly implies redress and reciprocity.

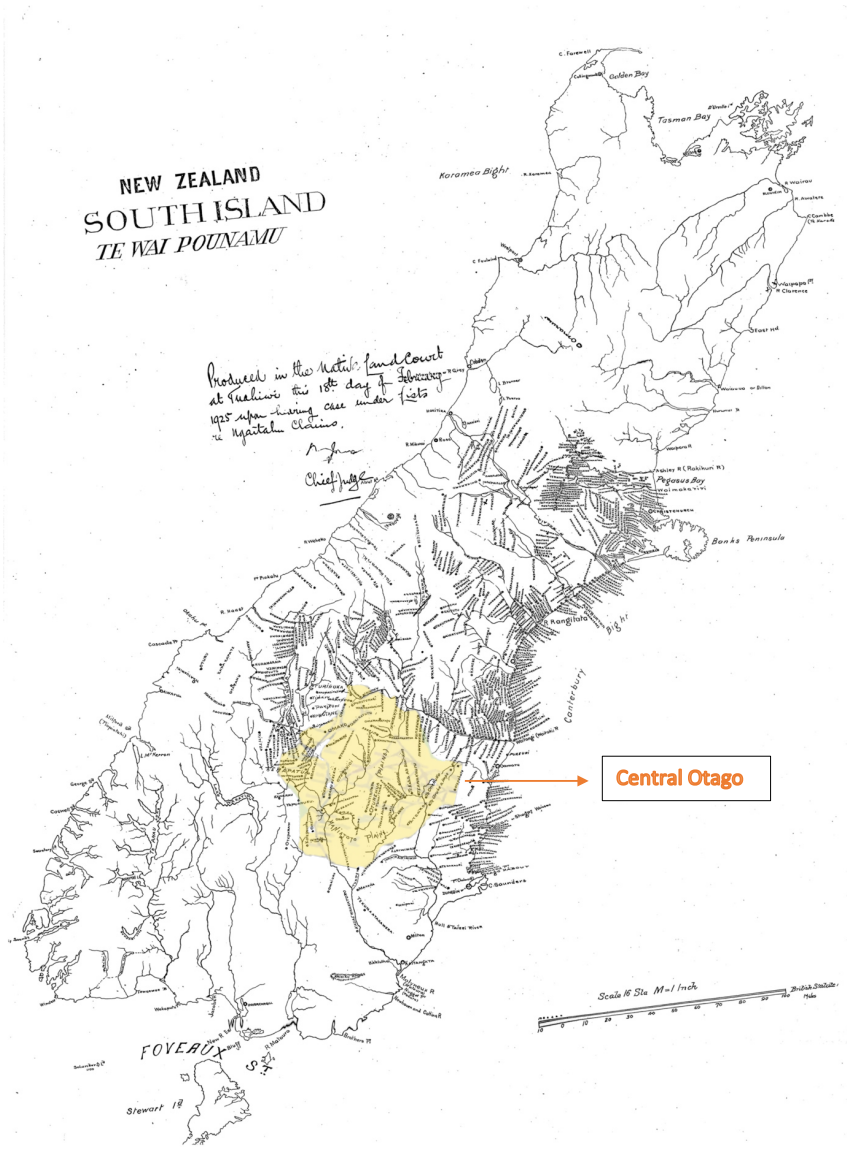
We have many examples of utu within our historical narratives. There are ōhākī(final words) in our whakapapa and history that illustrate utu. Some may be warnings to not seek revenge. Utu itself did not always result in carnage. In some instances utu was seen

with the exchange of resource and food as a form of payment. Utu today can be the restoration of places and riverways and restoring authentic knowledge. Utu is a very important concept that pervades many aspects of te ao Māori.

There is an example of restoration taking place in Central Otago with re-planting native trees that once covered the land;

https://www.odt.co.nz/lifestyle/magazine/centrals-lost-cloak





Map drawn by HK Taiaroa in the 1880s. Here it can be seen that there was many place names which also reflects consistent occupation of the Central Otago area.

Placenames

There are a few placenames below however there are many more and this is a work in progress as we do our research and unlock te reo Māori passages written in old manuscripts. There are some explanations below and some are direct translations of HK Taiaroa's 1880 Mahika Kai lists (food gathering lists) for the 1879 Smith-Nairn Royal Commission of Inquiry. H.K. Taiaroa hailed from Ōtākou and was an extremely influential Kāi Tahu politician and leader of his time. Taiaroa collected and recorded "Mahinga Kai" (food gathering) word lists in 1880. These were lists of traditional food resource and their locations within the Kāi Tahu area, collected across a number of traditional villages from knowledgeable kaumatua and Kāi Tahu community leaders. Maps and some other details were included in these lists.

Clutha / Mata-au

The Mata-au River takes its name from a Kāi Tahu whakapapa that traces the genealogy of water. On that basis, the Mata-au is seen as a descendant of the creation traditions. The Mata-au was part of a mahinga kai trail that led inland and was used by Ōtākou hapū, including Kāti Kurī, Kāi Te Ruahikihiki, Kāti Huirapa and Kāi Tūahuriri. The river was also very important in the transportation of pounamu from inland areas down to settlements on the coast, from where it was traded north and south[1].

Kāmoanahaehae

Kāmoanahaehae is the junction of Mata-au (the Clutha River) and Manuherekia (the Manuherekia River) in Central Otago.

Haehaeata

Haehaeata is the traditional Māori name for Leaning Rock, in the Dunstan Mountains in Central Otago.

Māniatoto

Māniatoto is the correct spelling for Maniototo – the elevated inland region surrounded by the upper reaches of the Taiari and Manuherekia rivers. One possible explanation of the name Māniatoto is that Mānia means "plain" and Buchanans Sedge (Carex buchananii) – the reddish brown native sedge that is widespread throughout Te Waipounamu. In certain light the Buchanans Sedge on the plain resembles a huge red blanket, or a sea of red blood (toto).

Patearoa

A mountain where food gathering took place. Weka were caught there and tikumu (mountain daisy) was gathered there for making clothes/cloaks.

[1] Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998

Te Paruparu-ā-Te-Kaunia

Te Paruparu-a-Te-Kaunia (the Great Moss Swamp) lies on the upper surface of Pātearoa (the Rock and Pillar Range). During the 1879 Smith-Nairn Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Ngāi Tahu land claims, Ngāi Tahu kaumātua recorded Te Paruparu-a-Te- Kaunia as a lagoon where pūtakitaki (paradise duck), pārera (grey duck), kukupako (black teal), pāteke (brown teal), whio (blue duck) and totokipio (New Zealand dabchick) were gathered. Originally a swamp, Te Paruparu-a-Te-Kaunia has been transformed into the Loganburn Reservoir, which is primarily used for irrigation and hydroelectricity.

Wairua-ā-pō (Rough Ridge)

Wairua-ā-pō is the traditional name for Rough Ridge in Central Otago. During the 1879 Smith-Nairn Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Ngāi Tahu land claims, Ngāi Tahu kaumātua recorded Wairua-ā-pō as a kāinga mahinga kai (food-gathering site) where weka were gathered.

Te Makarara (Lees Stream)

H.K Taiaroa recorded "**Te Makarara"** in Māori as

"E awa mahinga tuna. E mahinga tutu,
e mahinga hinu taramea."

This is translated as,

"This is a river where eels can be taken.
Tutu berries can be gathered here as
can the scent of the taramea."

Eels were an incredibly important food resource. Ōtākou Māori travelled to collect eels in to areas like the Taiari and further afield. There are freshwater eels and saltwater eels. Edward Shortland wrote about the tutu on his journey in the 1840s by foot close to Ōamaru. He was eager to keep moving however Māori had stopped to feed on tutu,

"Here I shot two ducks, while I waited for my other natives,
who lingered behind unable to resist a "tutu" scrub black
with fruit. Their stained hands and faces spoke of the
cause of delay."[2]

Fragrant Taramea or wild Spaniard was highly valued. South Island Māori held the leaves over a fire to release the oil, which was collected in a small container.

[2] Edward Shortland, (1851) *The Southern Districts of New Zealand*: 195

Mahika Kai

Weka

There were Weka hunting grounds in Central Otago.

Hinu-weka (Fat of the weka/woodhen)

The juice or gum of the taramea was collected and combined with the fat of the weka (woodhen) and this was used to dress hair and to rub on the body. Taramea was the common perfume for southern Māori.

The hinu of the weka was also combined with gum (mapara) out of the rimu tree which was burnt. The soot was mixed with the hinu-weka or other suitable animal oil to make tatooing ink.

Weka oil was also considered to be good for taking the inflammation out of wounds and for rapid healing.

Hopu weka (catching weka)

Weka were a succulent meal and relatively easy to catch. Catching birds was known as Tahere Manu and it involved bringing birds low and snearing them with a noose on a stick (known as a pihere). This was done by calling the birds with a particular sound that was made with grass. Calling a weka was known as whakakeokeo and the leaf used was a blade of kakaha grass that was doubled. The kakaha was a course piece of grass that bore berries and was flax like in nature. A caller could bring many birds around and snaring them was quite simple, with a noose looped on a stick that was five or six feet long. A shorter stick sometime wore a wing of a bird or a bright object to entice the inquisitive weka – the weka would put its head through the noose and be caught. Southern Maori would journey through to places like Manuwhāia and other areas in central Otago in the months of June and July when weka were at their prime.

Cooking weka

Weka would be plucked once killed and the backbone was taken out. The birds would then be laid with hot stones in a container (tahā – gourd as a container) and then into a type of oven. Once cooked it was then transferred to another container made from totara bark. These containers were covered with raupō and bark and they were practically preserved in their own fat and lasted for years. These could also be taken on a jouney for kai.

Tuna

There were many ways in which Southern Māori caught eels.

Bobbing was one way, where a bob was made of worms threaded on to a flax string wand dropped in to the water. The eel would bite on the the worms and it was hauled out on to the ground.

Eels were also speared. The eel spear was known as a matarau. This was traditionally made of mānuka and had wooden prongs with which to spear the eel. Spearing occured in the day and at night with torches (rama). The eels were hit on the head but this would often only stun them. A bone needle would thread a type of rope of flax through their head and would be hung, and prepared in order to dry the flesh.

Furthermore there were eel pots known as hīnaki that were generally made from supplejack. The hīnaki is long and round and the eel enters it and cannot escape. There are many types of hīnaki throughout the world that are similar in nature.

There were many ways to catch eel and there are various ways they were prepared for eat.

Tikumu

This is the mountain daisy. Rainproof cloaks were made of flax fibre and mountain daisy leaves;

The whitau is woven as in ordinary mats but rows of big tikumu leaves are attached with aho (threads) of fine whitau. The course cloak is designed to protect the wearer from rain and snow.

Occupation

There is evidence of occupation in Central Otago,

Discovery of a Maori Kete at Upper Taieri.

Through the courtesy of Mr. W. G. Rutherford, of Rugged Ridges, I was enabled to examine a very interesting Maori kete, or basket, containing a number of articles of interest, which had been found in a small cave formed by an overhanging rock on the Puketoi Station, Patearoa, Upper Taieri, by Mr. D. M. Wright. The kete was a large one, laced up with a long attached cord, which passed alternately through the small loops on the opposite sides in the usual way, and was in excellent condition, the cave being clean and dry. The contents were as follows:—

(1.) Several bundles of dressed flax (whitau), in hanks (whenu). Two of the bundles were stained a beautiful black colour (parapara).

(2.) Two small mats, just commenced (kakahu).

Kyeburn

(From our own Correspondent.)

I travelled some distance up the Creek the other day to inspect a Maori relic, which had been discovered 'by Mr. Edward Douglas in a landslip, adjoining the Horseshoe Bend. The relic in question consisted of a greenstone chisel, about nine inches in length—the

cutting edge being three inches, arid the greatest thickness about one and a half inches. The stone is not of first rate quality, but a considerable amount of work has been expended upon it, the handle having been rounded on one side and flattened on the reverse. The chisel has apparently done good service in its day, one side having been worn into a slightly concave form. The handle has been left in its rough state, but the sides of the chisel have been evidently highly polished, but have now assumed a dull appearance from the length of time no doubt which it has been buried. It is impossible to say at what depth this instrument was deposited, as it was found projecting from the surface in a land slip, but it is quite evident that it cannot have been resting at any great depth. Mr. Douglas, I believe, intends to prospect for more in the same locality.
Mount Ida Chronicle, 22 December 1871

(3.) A very large Haliotis shell (paua), which had a beautiful plaited-flax handle worked on to it, passing through the natural holes in the shell. The shell was still full of red paint, and a piece of an old mat soaked in the paint was in it to serve as a brush. The red paint would be either applied to the person or to the buildings or ornaments of a chief. There was a smaller paua shell not used.

(4.) Two bones from the wings of an albatross, cut off neatly at each end, and prepared for flutes; the holes, however, were not bored.

(5.) Several pieces of dogskin: one piece cut into strips for a chief's mat; colour, reddish-brown and white.

(6.) A bag about 10in. by 6in., beautifully made in several patterns, a long flax cord attached to the upper part. The bag was made of very thin strips of some leaf, and the Puketeraki natives at once recognised it as a kind called pukoro, this being the name for a particular kind of bag into which the fruit of the tutu (Coriaria) is put, and the juice expressed through the interstices. I know of no other example of this. The bag itself was half-full of kokowai.

(7.) Another very small bag of flax(?) fibre, made in a peculiar way; about 5in. long. Inside this little bag or sachet was a piece of mimiha, a kind of pitch picked up occasionally on the beaches in Otago, and which was used by the natives as a masticatory. In the North it was known as kauri tawhiti.

(8.) Two pairs of sandals (paraerae), made from the plaited leaves of the cabbage-tree (Cordyline). One pair was quite new and single-soled (takitahi); the other pair had been worn, and were much thicker, being double-soled (torua).

(9.) Several large bundles of the tomentum stripped from the back of the large alpine Celmisia (tikumu). This was worked into warm and handsome mats.*

(10.) A small parcel of a sticky-leafed Celmisia (C. viscosa). These leaves have a very pleasant smell, and were probably gathered for the viscid sweet-smelling gum (hakeke). There was also a small packet of the fragrant gum of the Pittosporum.

(11.) A hank of twisted flax-threads, format-making (aho).

(12.) Fragment of a whitebait-net made of flax.

(13.) Small bundle of the vascular part of the cabbage-tree stem or root (kauru).

(14.) Small bunch of albatross-feathers.

(15.) Feathers of the kakapo.

(16.) Several Mytilus shells, which had been used for scraping and preparing the flax.

The kete thus contained, probably, the treasures of some industrious old Maori lady who had been up to the alpine country to collect the Celmisia tomentum for a mat for her lord and master. She had likewise collected some sweet-smelling gums, to be hung in a small sachet round her neck; and possibly the other articles were taken with her as fancy-work to occupy the hours of a wet day, when she did not feel inclined to travel. There were three very fine specimens in this find—the shell with the flax handle or loop for suspension, the bag for straining the juice of the tutu, and the little bag or sachet for the masticatory.
TNZI [Volume 29, 1896 page 175]

HYDE NOTES.

A very interesting find of Maori curios was made las'; week in a cave on Sinclair's run, Fullarton's, Hyde, by Mr H. 4.. Mathewson. The articles found comprised chiefly Maori flax work—viz., a large piece of stuff woven out of flax fibre, which was very ornamental, and evidently meant for a chief's dress ; a handsome piece of fringed • flax work artistically woven ; a piece of rough cloth made out of the same material; a Maori kit beautifully worked, containing two hanks of twine, quite equal in strength and evenness to twine made by machinery. In the kit was also a handkerchief made out of the fibre of some plant. The find was made in a very dry spot in a secluded cave, and being carefully wrapped up in several ply of flax cloth, was beautifully preserved, and must have been there a considerable time. The articles are open to inspection.
Mount Ida Chronicle, July 29th, 1894.

Middlemarch

Maori Curio.— A Maori curio was found on Mr Thomas McLay's run at Little Boss's Creek by some of his men when out rabbiting. It is exactly the shape of a bowl hewn out of a piece of solid goai. It is in a splendid state of preservation, having lain under the shelter of a rock, where ie was perfectly dry. A piece of an old Maori kit was also found with it, but the rats had eaten the greater part of this treasure away.
Otago Witness 30 July 1896

History/Narratives

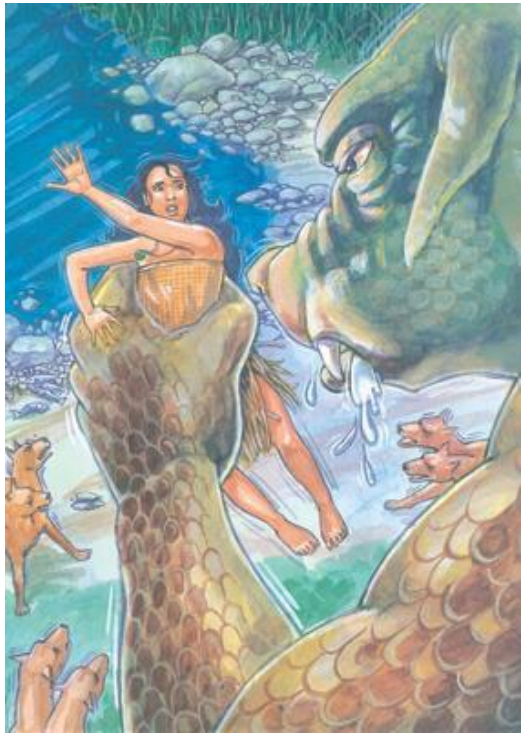
Kōpūwai

Kōpūwai was the giant who swallowed the Mataau (Clutha River) in an endeavour to catch a Rapuwai woman named Kaiāmio. He was afterwards turned into the Old Man Range in Central Otago and is seen as the large free-standing rock known as The Obelisk. The range's Māori name is "Kōpūwai" to this day, and a small lake near them is called "Hapua-o-Kaiāmio." When Kōpūwai was turned into stone his pack of ten two-headed dogs were dispersed and six of them took refuge in a carved cave on the riverbank in the township of Duntroon, named Ka-waikoukou. These dogs were turned into stone, and if you go to that cave you can still see their two-headed bodies sticking out of the water.

Te Waka-huruhuru-manu

An ancient narrative tells of the arrival of a waka tipua, which had on board a number of gigantic beings, to which Kōpūwai is the best known. Of the others Pouakai is now remembered as a huge bird (some say this was also the ancient and correct name of the moa). According to the description given, Kōmakohua was a white bird the size of a domestic fowl, which lived in cliffs and peered down at passers-by. It could fly and had a sharp beak. Pukutuaro was a harmless monster and lived in a pond at the headwaters of the Rakaia River. Te Karara-huarau had his abode at Taupo and Waitata in the Collingwood district and ran away with a woman known as Ruru. She got away from him but was recaptured. Her people built a house the size of Te Karara and sent for him to visit them. Ruru came overland but Karara swam round by sea. He was tired and slept sound that night and the people set fire to the house and burnt him.

It is also suggested that the Maeroero were crew on this waka. They were hairy, bush men that used to reside in the forested hills all about Otago and Southland. On a farm at Ōwaka there is a big flat stone which is tapu because one of the Maeroero who came on Te-Waka- huruhuru-manu used it. The ghosts would worship there and then go on to Table Hill. When the Europeans came to Otago the Tautuku Forest was said to be haunted by these fearsome "wild men of the woods" and they would not venture into its depths.



Kōpūwai captures the maiden

Pouakai in the cave drawings

Kōpūwai or The Obelisk on the Crown Range

Rakaihautū

According to Maori tradition the very first people to arrive in the South Island were the Waitaha. They had originally lived in the Pacific homeland called Patunuioaio and had decided to leave due to a war that was raging. The chief, Mātiti, gave his son-in-law, Rakaihautū, a great canoe called Uruao. He loaded the canoe with representatives of local tribes and headed off for new lands. At every island that he made land fall he discovered inhabitants until he reached the Marlborough are of the South Island.

Rakaihautū carried with him a famous kō, or digging stick, called Tūwhakarōria and when he landed he dug three pools. They were used to predict the South Island may have to offer. The predictions stated that they would find lakes and waterways full of sustenance, lakes that were freezing cold as they had never encountered before and lakes that would be dug by man's hand.

It was decided they should explore the inland and the coastline so Rakaihautū sent his son, Te Rakihouia with the canoe to circumnavigate the island whilst Rakaihautū went inland. Te Rakihouia discovered abundant food resources in the bird colonies on the coastal cliffs and also the set up eel weirs at the mouths of all the rivers. Meanwhile Rakaihautū and his party were performing great deeds inland.

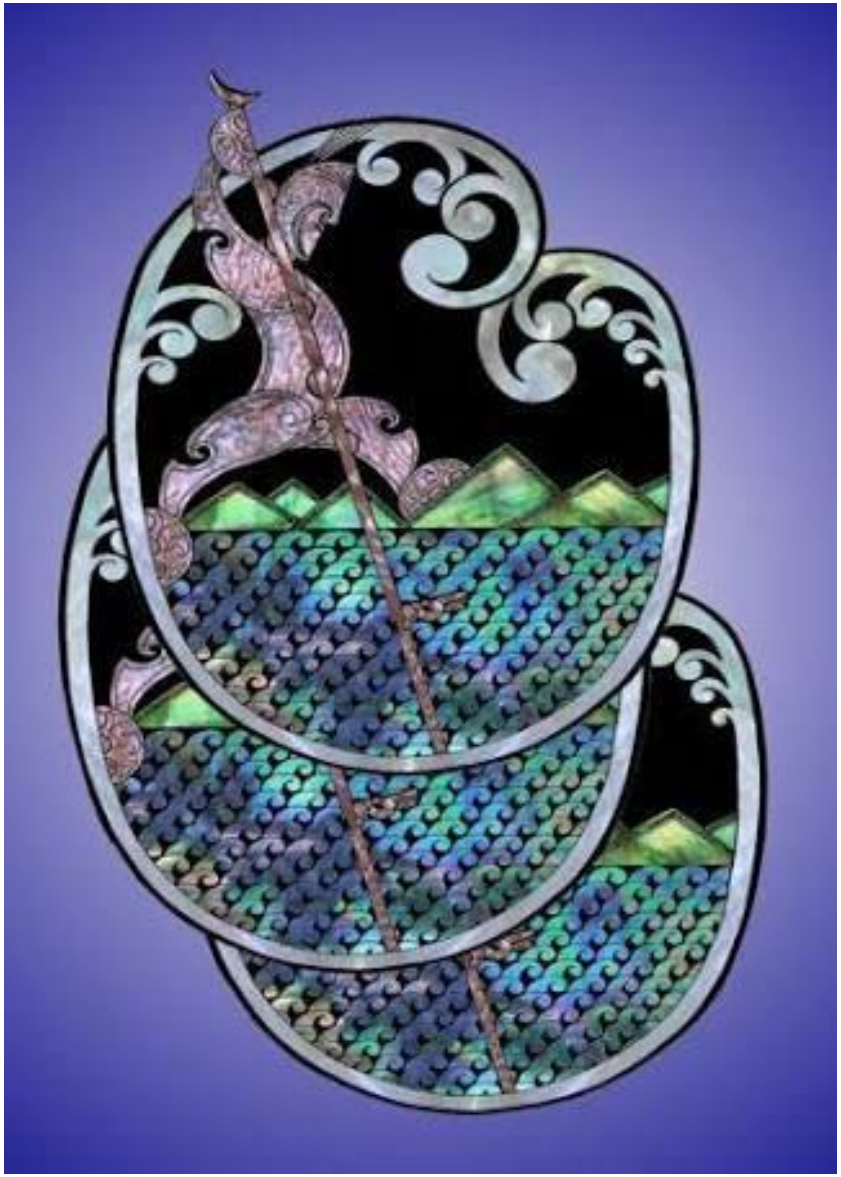
When ever Rakaihautu's spade touch the earth a lake was formed. His trail can be followed from the northern lakes Rotoiti and Rotoroa through to lakesTakapō, Ōhau, Hwea, Wānaka and then Whakatipu. More correctly this lake was known as Whakatipu-wai-māori – Whakatipu of the Fresh Water whilst Lake McKerrow was known as Whakatipu- wai-tai – Whakatipu of the Salt Water. Rakaihautu continued on to lakes Te Ana-au, Manapōuri (Moturau was its original name) and then back out to the coast to Waihora,

known today as Lake Waihola. They stopped briefly in Dunedin and named the river Kaikarae (Kaikorai) and carried on to the mouth of the Waitaki River.

At the mouth of the Waitaki Rākaihautū met up with Te Rakihouia where they discussed the best place to set up their village. They decided upon the sheltered harbour of Akaroa and, when they set off for their new home, they were so proud they were strutting. The Canterbury Plains are known as Te Pakihi Whakatekateka o Waitaha – The Plains Where Waitaha Strutted Proudly. Rakaihautu dug two new lakes Wairewa and Waihora (Lakes Forsyth and Ellesmere) before settling at Akaroa.

The Waitaha people were probably the people that archaeologists called the Moa hunters. They mostly lived at the mouths of rivers and would travel inland to catch moa and then transport the butchered meat downstream on reed rafts. The Waitaha were real people and not mythical even though their deeds are in the realm of mythology. In that regard they are very like the Picts of Britain. They were a real, early British culture but as other people settled in England they were relegated to myth and legend and become known as the pixies.

The genealogies of the Waitaha people can be traced from Rākaihautū through to the living descendants who are the modern day Kāi Tahu.



Rākaihautū

Māori goldminers in Otago

In an environment that was changing rapidly before the eyes of the indigenous people of New Zealand, gold mining was in-fact a gateway to potential economic success, for all people no matter the ethnicity. Many Māori were very successful in the free-trade environment where they were able to lay their stake to materials like gold. In a climate where colonisation and Western democracy had disenfranchised individual Māori from political power and the capital to participate in the new economy, goldmining offered a chance at economic success. It was an opportunity that was not impeded by class, status or ethnicity. The rapid wave of western modernernity that engulfed Māori villages and communities in the North and the South Island should not be underestimated here. It could be argued that goldmining and the likes allowed Māori an equal footing with Europeans, free of the restrictions and tarriffs.

Documentation about Māori goldminers can be found in past newspaper articles, word of mouth and old diaries. It is known that Raniera Ellison[3] sought gold and travelled with many other Māori. They travelled in groups on horseback and by foot in through Central Otago and to Whakatipu Waimāori and various rivers such as the Shotover.

Raniera himself found gold with Hakaraia Haeroa and Henare Patukopa. Unfortunately little is known about Haeroa or Patukopa after the gold find other that Hakaraia lived at Ōtākou for some time. There were definitely other Kāi Tahu people at the goldfields in central as well-known names like Rehu, Rickus and Te Maire are discussed.

[3] He hails from the Te Āti awa tribe in the North Island – he married Te Matenga Taiaroa's grand-daughter (Nani Weller) from Ōtākou and they have many descendants.

Thomas Green (Tame Kirini) spent some time at the gold fields and he wrote a diary while he was there. Thomas Eustace Green was born in 1840 and died in 1914. He was from Tuahiwi, a North Canterbury Village. He was schooled in the last South Island Māori traditional school in genealogy. He was the leader of his traditional tribal council in the early 1900s. He was an avid writer in Māori and in English on large tribal narratives and genealogy of which formed the basis for the detailed structure of the Ngāi Tahu Trust Board in the 1920s.

He wrote diary extracts about his time in the fields in 1864. He discusses the weather, that food was sparse, the death of a particular goldminer from an accident. He also mentioned meeting up with other Māori in Cromwell, including that of Mohi Ngatata from Taranaki. He talks of having a very sore ear, possibly an ear infection and paid for some medicine. He also mentions the river rising. He writes this in English and Māori. The detail in these diaries and others, contribute significantly to the larger narrative of Māori goldminers in central in Otago. This is definitely a body of work that is still relatively untouched and would go a long way to demystifying the overall place of Māori in the goldmining history of this area.

Raniera's wind-fall allowed him the freedom to buy land throughout the country and educate his children through to tertiary study and beyond and contribute funds to Parihaka, supporting those imprisoned in the Taranaki land confiscations. Rāniera also travelled extensively throughout the country, campaigning politically for his Taranaki people, as well as actively supporting the Ngāi Tahu claim. According to Edward Ellison (Raniera's great

grandson), the local's in the small town of Portobello (the small township next to Ōtākou) would see Rāniera passing through and ask him "Where are you off to now Danny?" and he would reply " I am off to fight the Pākehā!".

Rāniera and Nani had twelve children. They had their own individual successes, like that of Tom Ellison, a trained lawyer and famous All Black (responsible for ensuring the haka was a part of their build up, that the silver fern was on their jersey and that the set play followed his book, named the Art of Rugby Football)

Rāniera's younger son, Edward Pohau Ellison trained and was a very successful doctor. Raniera's grandchild also set up one of the most successful fishing companies for Māori whanau in the 1950s and 60s. These successes and more were not only the result of Rāniera's tenacity as an entrepreneur, but the gold-find changed the direction of the Ellison family as it opened pathways and levelled the playing field. Gold was the great leveller in this instance.