Aukaha
KIA KAHA, AU KAHA

Cultural Narrative *for* Kiwirail

Kiwirail

The colonial government contracted Brogdens to build railways and recruit migrant workers. In 1872–3 they brought 2200 English immigrants here, including 1300 working-age men (mostly agricultural labourers) contracted to two years' work on railway construction. Brodgens' 'navvies' (this common name for public works labourers derived from the 'navigators' who had dug Britain's 18th-century canals) set to work on contracts at or near Auckland, Napier, Wellington, Picton, Oamaru and Invercargill. They worked by hand using simple tools – picks and shovels, horses and carts, and dynamite – and endured primitive living conditions in isolated camps. Vogel's rail plan initially made its greatest strides in the South Island. A Christchurch–Dunedin railway was completed in 1878, cutting travel time between the South Island's largest cities to around 11 hours. The following year New Zealand's first 'main trunk' line linked Christchurch with Invercargill, while a series of branch lines snaked inland from the coast.[1]

Ka whana atu/Travel

Kāi Tahu were a nomadic people who travelled extensively on land and sea. They travelled from Ōtākou villages up the Otago Harbour and into bays and inlets within the Dunedin area, known as Otepoti. It was one of the several tauraka waka (landing spots) around the head of the harbour. Otepoti was near Bell Hill which once intruded in to the harbour. Toitū was another tauraka waka and there were others. These tauraka waka were points from which the Ōtākou-based Māori would hunt in the surrounding bush. Māori would drag their waka into estuaries and walk by foot to food-gathering places such as the Taiari (now known as Taieri), which was rich in food sources like birds and eels. Four species of moa roamed the Otago Peninsula, and there were moa hunter sites in Andersons Bay, St Kilda and St Clair.

Māori also followed tracks over the peninsula, around the Lawyers Head area and into the Taiari plain. According to traditions, the bush was so thick in the Dunedin area that when some Europeans ventured in they never returned. The lakes and wetland area in the lower Taiari Plain were much larger in pre contact times before drainage and flood control works were initiated, and teemed with kai, including whitebait, eels, lamprey, waterfowl and birdlife. The journey to and from the Peninsula settlements to the lakes and wetlands in the lower Taiari Plains was a well worn path, and included communal waka at the top end of Ōwhiro Stream (near Mosgiel turnoff) used to navigate down the Ōwhiro, into the Taiari River on to the settlements near the wetlands. Shortland suggests that the ancient walking tracks were falling into disuse by the time he explored the Otago area because of the superior marine technology that Māori had employed over the previous 40 years.[2] The whaling boat proved to be an improved mode of sea transport from the carved single or double-hulled Māori vessels that dominated sea transport until the arrival of the European.

The waterways and Ōtākou harbour were travel highways for mana whenua, who moved easily throughout the South Island by waka and foot. They travelled for resources, including the collection and preparation of kai and pounamu. Mana whenua also traded their goods, and that developed even further when Pākehā arrived on our shores. We were trading across to Australia and back and in our own backyard. We traded flax and kaimoana, and we got involved in trading whale oil, pigs and potatoes.

Ōtākou/The harbour

Hillside and the wharf area of the harbour were built on the shore and intertidal area of Ōtākou awa.

Ōtākou is the significant name of the area. Ōtākou was originally the name of the waterway that spans the area from Pukekura (Taiaroa Head) up to Dunedin city. Although it is an ocean harbour, it was known as an awa (river) by our old people because of its river-like appearance. Today Ōtākou is more widely recognised in the Otago area as the name for the entire harbour and the settlement at the lower end of the Otago Peninsula. Otago (a modified version of Ōtākou) eventually became the name for the entire southern region. The origins of the meaning are still somewhat dubious although, as Beattie recorded, the word "kou" in Ōtākou means a jutting point or an end point, which described a particular channel that moves up the harbour and stops at a particular point – a jutting point.

The original people who occupied the area for many generations hailed from the tribes known as Hāwea, Rapuwai and Waitaha. The following waves of people migrated in different phases from the North Island and married into those existing groups of people. Kāti Māmoe were the first in the series of migrations south. The migration that followed Kāti Māmoe were descendants of an ancestor, Tahupōtiki, who lived on the east coast of the North Island around the area now known as Hawke's Bay. The Kāi Tahu tribe is a well-known Māori entity of the South Island today and takes its name from Tahupōtiki.

A series of events over a relatively short timeframe explains Kāi Tahu's position at the harbour entrance of the Otago Peninsula. The first known arrival of Kāi Tahu to Otago started with the ancestor Waitai, who journeyed south leaving behind his siblings and relations, who were known as Kāti Kurī. Kāti Kurī lived in the Wellington area and made their way to the South Island. Waitai made his way south to the fortified village, Pukekura (Taiaroa Head) where he became resident. He married the sister of Te Rakitauneke, a local Kāti Māmoe chief, and an alliance was established. The pair embarked on a number of skirmishes throughout Otago, before Waitai moved further south to Mokomoko (inlet between Bluff and present day Invercargill) where he was eventually killed by local Kāti Māmoe.

According to iwi history, a key figure was Rakiihia, who was buried in the vicinity at what is now known as Lookout Point in Dunedin. He was buried so he could survey his domains to the south and the north from a prominent hill top that afforded views. Rakiihia was of Kāti Māmoe descent (the grandson of Tūtemākohu of the senior Kāti Māmoe line). Rakiihia entered into negotiations at Kaiapoi with Te Hautapunui-o-tū (senior Kāi Tahu chief). The negotiation was successful, and marriages were arranged as part of this process. The truce is remembered in the name Poupoutunoa, which is the name of a hill near Clinton. Rakiihia stayed on at Kaiapoi for some time and eventually returned south to Ōtākou with Te Hau Tapunuiotū to find that his sister was being treated badly by her 'household slaves'.[3] Rakiihia killed the slaves and was wounded in the process. He died a prolonged death as recorded in a Māori language manuscript.[4]

Ko te wāhi e noho nei te ope nei he rae kei te taha hauauru o te awa o te wahapū o Ōtākou e rere atu ana te raina rerewe o Kōpūtai ki Otepoti. Ka tae ki te rae ka kitea atu te taone Otepoti. Koia te wāhi i noho ai taua ope. I muri mai i tā rāua whawhai ko tōna hoariri, ka rewa te ope nei. Noho rawa atu i reira i te matenga o Rakiihia. Ka tanumia ki tētahi wāhi kei roto i te taone o Otepoti. Ko Urunga-te-Raki te ingoa.

Translation:
The group resided at the head of the eastern side of the river at the entrance of Ōtākou, the train track runs from Port Chalmers to Dunedin. Dunedin city can be seen when you arrive at the point. This is where the group resided. Following the fight, the group left. They stayed until Rakiihia's passing. He was buried in a place in Dunedin city. Urunga-te-Raki is the name of that place.

Takata pora/Arrival of Europeans

In 1836, the ship The Sydney Packet arrived at Ōtākou with a few influenza cases on board. The disease immediately attacked Māori and the people died in hundreds, reducing the population to an alarming degree. Following the demise of the Ōtākou Māori population came the loss of land. This began with the Treaty of Waitangi, which was taken by Major Bunbury throughout the Kāi Tahu tribal region to obtain Southern Māori signatures. The Treaty had been signed by many iwi (tribes) in the North Island, and Korako (nephew of Taiaroa) and Karetai signed it at Taiaroa Head on 13 June 1840. They were among seven signatures for southern Māori. The premise they accepted in their hearts and minds was that under the Treaty they would retain their lands and have equal protection and rights with British citizens. Political struggle over the total disregard of the promises agreed to in the Treaty of Waitangi would continue for 150 years. After the signing of the Treaty came the most significant contractual breach for Māori on the Otago Peninsula.

Under pressure from the New Zealand Company, the British Crown waived its right of pre-emption as stated in the Treaty of Waitangi, allowing the New Zealand Company to negotiate with the local chiefs for the purchase of land in the south. The New Zealand Company and the Free Church of Scotland selected the area on the mainland at the head of the harbour for a permanent site, to be called New Edinburgh. Frederick Tuckett, a surveyor for the New Zealand Company, was assigned to oversee the purchase of the site.

In 1844, George Clarke wrote an account of the proceedings in Otago, which included Tuckett, surveyors and local Māori. They had come to survey the land for a "New Edinborough, the Dunedin of the future".[5]

Kāi Tahu wanted to keep 21,250 acres of Otago Peninsula land with ancestral sites for themselves. However, the Europeans did not agree and would not proceed with the sale unless the peninsula was included. The Māori conceded to accept only the land at the northern end of the peninsula and a few other areas outside of that, totalling 9,612 acres. On 31 July 1844 at Kōpūtai, 25 chiefs signed the Otago Deed, selling around 400,000 acres for £2,400. Of the 400,000 acres, 150,000 acres would be chosen for the New Edinburgh site. In addition to this land, verbal agreements were made to reserve 10% of all land sold, known as 'the tenths', in trust for the benefit of Kāi Tahu. The agreement was not honoured, and work began on New Edinburgh on the mainland in 1846.

The organised settlement of the suburban and rural areas of the peninsula began in 1848, focusing on Andersons Bay and Portobello. The peninsula was divided into farms of about 50 acres, which were gradually occupied and supplied a growing Dunedin with food. West states that "the sale of the Otago Block to the New Zealand Company in 1844 was by far the most significant event that shifted control over the Peninsula... the Ōtākou Māori were stranded on the northern tip of the Otago Peninsula, confined to meagre portions of their once vast property. The way was thereby opened to the European settlement, and the making of a new environment on the Otago Peninsula."[6]

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Place names around Hillside/Kiwirail

Te Au Located in Roslyn and extends to Arthur Street.

Toitū River running from Mornington and under Stafford Street down to the harbour.

Pakaru This is a lagoon/estuary in the Fairfield area. Pakaru is the traditional Māori name for the lagoon, which is near the mouth of Kaikarae (the Kaikorai Stream). Along with Kai Karae, Pakaru was an important kāika mahika kai (food-gathering place) for local Kāi Tahu.

Pokohiwi A ridge above High Street in Mornington, named after a chief from the local sub-tribe, Kāi Te Ruahikihiki.

Kaikarae An important river and area of food gathering that runs in behind Riselaw Road. Known today as Kaikorai but should be spelt Kaikarae.

Kaituna A noted lagoon where tuna was harvested, near the Dunedin gas works.

Uruka te Raki The meaning of this is associated with a Kāti Māmoe ancestor, Rakiihia. It is the name for the Hillside area.

Te Raka-a-ruka-te-raki The place where Te Rakiihia (a tupuna) was buried – a ridge up above St Clair, near Corstorphine.

Ōtākou The harbour – known as Te Awa o Ōtākou – which has been reclaimed and built on where the wharf is today.

> The importance of shellfish is demonstrated by the huge piles of shells in midden material found on coastal sites. Karetai also cited many fish and marine species such as blue cod (rawaru), red cod (hoka), rock cod (patutuki), trumpeter (koekohe), tarakihi, greenbone (marare), crayfish (kōura) and seals (pakake), which provided a mainstay of sustenance for many generations of Kāi Tahu. "

Mahika kai/Food gathering

At the time of European settlement in the mid-1800s, the low-lying South Dunedin area known then as 'The Flat' was generally a marshy environment, covered with silver tussock, rushes and flax. Along the harbour margin was a wide, tidal mud-flat, and there were coastal lagoons and wide, low sand dunes, much flatter than those along the St Clair coast today.[7]

The Otago Harbour was a major source of kaimoana. Tunuku Karetai, an elder interviewed by Beattie in 1920, provided a list of species that were gathered within the harbour. This included shellfish such as cockles (tuaki), pāua, yellow-foot pāua (koeo), pipi, periwinkles (pupu), roroa (a type of clam), different species of mussels (kuku, pukanikani and toretore), whakai-o-tama (the Otago Māori word for toheroa) and limpets (whetiko and kakihi).

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South Dunedin and Hillside/Carisbrook was an estuarine area, probably quite marshy as shown in the images, and would have been filled with birdlife, providing mana whenua with a great source of kai, including tuna (eel), putakitaki (paradise duck), parera (grey duck), pakura (swamp hen), whio (blue duck) and inaka (whitebait). The upper harbour was a 'kohanga' of manu and kai.

The outlook from George Street down the Otago Harbour brings to mind the fishing in the harbour and can also be related to the fishing hook.

H. K. Taiaroa wrote in 1880:

Ko Te Awa Otakou
Ko te whakamaramatanga o tenei awa moana Otakou e nui nga tikanga pumau o roto o tenei awa me nga take a nga Maori i nohoia ai tenei awa moana a Otakou. I o nga take nui kei nga ika o taua awa e maha ona ika o tenei awa: e tohora, e paikea, e mako, e hapuku, e maka, e patiki, e hokahoka, e aua, e wheke, e paara, e patutuki.
Ko nga pipi o taua awa: e tuaki, e roroa, e kaiotama, e kakahi, e whetiko, e pupu, e tio.[9]

Translation:

Otago Harbour
This is an explanation of the significant and enduring associations that Maori, who have long resided here, have with the Otago Harbour [awa moana Otakou]. Most important is the recognition of the abundant species: southern right whales, humpback whales, sharks, groper, barracouta, flounder, red cod, mullet, octopus, frost fish and rock cod. The shellfish in the harbour were: littleneck clams (cockles), roroa (like a pipi or small tuatua), kaiotama (toheroa), kakahi (freshwater mussel or limpet – kakihi) whetiko (mud snail), pupu (catseye) and tio (oysters).
The railway has had an unfortunate impact on the ecosystem. The railway on the Port Chalmers side of the peninsula has taken out sections of the coastline and damaged tidal areas. Development of the city and its infrastructure has also damaged the entire South Dunedin area of estuary and mudflats.

J.T. (John Turnbull) Thomson, Dunedin, New Zealand, from Andersons Bay, 1856, watercolour on paper: 186 x 382mm, 92/1298, Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago

View across the upper Otago Harbour and the South Dunedin plain from Tainui at right to Andersons Bay and Vauxhall at left. This scene was captured from the edge of the Town Belt, above Rattray Street, looking southeast, 1865. (Single view of Dunedin, Joseph Perry. Hocken collections).

Raina rerewe me te tereina/ Some train and railway history

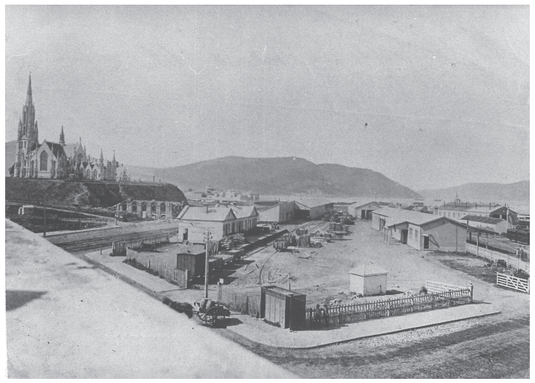
The railway became a very important part of our history, enabling our people to get from village to village with ease. The first railway lines were built in the South Island in the 1860s. From 1870, the government worked to develop railways. They wanted railways to carry products from farms, forests and mines to markets and ports and to provide access to land bought or confiscated from Māori, so Pākehā could settle it.[10]

Pōtiki writes about the once isolated community of Ōtākou on the Otago Peninsula:

The Peninsula communities remained relatively isolated through to the mid 20th century. A high road on the backbone of the Peninsula was the first to be built and from the 1860s Scottish farmers settled here. They burnt off the bush and sectioned off paddocks with rock walls. Dairy farming took a hold and fed into the communities on the Peninsula. These long-standing farming families are a part of the fabric of the peninsula. The coast road from the mainland to the peninsula was difficult to traverse and was not tar sealed until the 1950s. In 1897 a petition was taken round to improve the road, "and was signed by nearly everyone in the district, asking the Government to complete the road through to Portobello. If this is done it will greatly improve the means of communication between Dunedin and the Kaik." (Otago Witness Newspaper, 1897: 30) My grandfather was born in 1907 (George Ellison) on a farm at Ōtākou. His parents sent him to secondary school on the mainland. He reminisced that he would wake early to milk cows, travel by horse to Portobello, cross by boat to Port Chalmers and train to Otago Boys High School in Dunedin. (pers comm, 1989)[11]

An interesting, extensive article published in 1900 talks in detail of Karitāne and its fete:

The fete and Native exhibition held on the Karitane Peninsula, near Puketeraki, for the purpose of raising funds to be employed in the improvement of the Karitane Domain reserve, was opened on Tuesday, and proved remarkably successful, especially in regard to the patronage it attracted. It was anticipated that 2000, or at most 3000, persons would attend, but instead of that number, nearly 7000 people must have been on the grounds. The first train — a heavy one— left Dunedin in an overcrowded condition shortly before 8 o'clock, but very many people who wanted to go by this train were unable to get foothold on it, and waited for the next. At a quarter to 11 the second train, consisting of two engines and 12 large carriages and covered trucks, started in a similar condition, many intending passengers being left behind at Dunedin, and none of the crowd at the upper station at Port Chalmers being able to get on board it. After this several trains left for the north, all fully loaded, and people continued to arrive at Puketeraki until 3 o'clock, at which hour a goodly number of those present were making preparations for the return journey, which had to be made under similar conditions of discomfort. The heavier trains had to be taken through the long tunnel on the northern trip in sections, progress was often painfully slow, and discomfort is a very mild word to describe the experience of the people in the crowded carriages and trucks as they were dragged through the long tunnels. No doubt the best that was possible was done under the circumstances; but the rolling stock at command was not equal to the unexpected strain that was put upon it. The train journey of 26 miles occupied rather more than two hours and a-half ; that must be admittedly rather slow progress, and as fully half the passengers had to stand the whole of the time, the trip was not a pleasant one.[12]



Hillside and the South Dunedin region

The Hillside workshops were officially opened in 1875, on the back of a rapidly booming railway industry that took off in the 1870s.

At the turn of the 20th century, Dunedin was New Zealand's most industrialized city, but with a more skilled and conservative labor force than the colony's three other major cities: Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. In all four cities, opportunities for domestic manufacturing, other than processing farm products, were limited by New Zealand's small population and agricultural export economy. Correspondingly, Caversham's workshops and factories remained small. The single exception, the government's railway workshops, employed 400 workers by 1905 and more than 700 by 1930, many of them highly skilled.[13]

By the late 1980s, restructuring of the railway workshops led to redundancies that hit people hard. Ann Simon (Alva Kapa's sister and Simon Kaan's and Janine Kapa's aunty) had gone straight from school to work in the Hillside Office in 1953. As computers reduced the need for office workers, she was persuaded to take voluntary redundancy in 1989 at the age of 51, after 37 years of service. She struggled to get another paid job:[14]

You weren't allowed to talk about it among your workmates, in case you stirred them up or something. I took it very hard. It took me about five years to readjust to not feeling really guilty about not going to work.... That was my life, just stopped like that, because they were my friends as well as my workmates. It definitely did take a toll, because my world had crashed really. I was hurt that it had to be that way. I understood it had to be, rather than put a younger person out, well, I thought... the older ones have to go first. I fell into quite a decline really, because my health deteriorated, because I didn't have any motivation to have to get up and do what you have to do, and I just stopped. But then I picked it up."[15]

Ann was of Kāti Irakehu and Kāi Tahu whakapapa. She was a well-known face in Dunedin and loved by many. She was a Māori warden, founding member of Āraiteuru Marae and a member of the Māori Women's Welfare.

E te taua, haere atu rā ki ō tupuna
e kāpunipuni ana
Kia au te moe

To Aunty Ann
Go to the gathering of your ancestors
Sleep peacefully

Up to and during the 1950s, the South Island Māori population was characterised by higher proportions of middle-aged and elderly people. An increase in the number of Māori males in the 20-25 age group moving south caused a significant shift in the age and sex profile of the South Island Māori population in comparison to national trends. This migration stream was initially stimulated by employment opportunities, which led to the population increasing dramatically in a short time span. After the downturn in these industries, any population gains were mainly by natural increase.[16]

> "The importance of restoring some authentic Māori history into the Hillside narrative is paramount. It was disappointing to note a complete absence of recognition of mana whenua in the Ian Dougherty publication on Hillside. Embedding mana whenua history into the design honours the history and brings visibility to mana whenua and their place."

The migration stream means there is a strong population of Mātā waka (North Island Māori) who have lived here, worked here, married here and raised children here for generations.

In 2018, 13,893 people or 11.0% of the population in Dunedin city identified as having Māori descent. A person has Māori descent if they are of the Māori race of New Zealand; this includes any descendant of such a person.

Many Māori live in the South Dunedin area and work at Hillside. They are Māori from many iwi, not necessarily mana whenua. However, there are natural whakapapa connections to each other that we draw on as a people.

When considering the demographic of Māori in the community, the term "utu", which can be interpreted as retribution and reciprocity, must be understood. The importance of restoring some authentic Māori history into the Hillside narrative is paramount. It was disappointing to note a complete absence of recognition of mana whenua in the Ian Dougherty publication on Hillside. Embedding mana whenua history into the design honours the history and brings visibility to mana whenua and their place. The groups of people who followed, became a part of the community and created a community have a strong foundation from which to share their story.

End notes

1 See https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/the-vogel-era/building-vogels-railways.

2 Edward Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand: A Journal, with Passing Notices of the Custom of the Aborigines,* London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1851.

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4 Private Hoani Maaka, manuscript.

5 *Scottish Settlers arrive in Otago,"* New Zealand History, Ministry of Culture and Heritage, https://nzhistory.govt.nz/scottish-settlers-arrive-otago, accessed 7 March 2021.

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9 HK Taiaroa, Private Manuscript, circa 1880s, Ōtākou.

10 Neill Atkinson, "Railways," Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/railways, accessed 22 August 2021.

11 Megan Potiki, *"Almost an Island,"* SHIMA Journal, 2015.

12 *"The Karitane Fete,"* Otago Witness, 4 January 1900.

13 Clyde Griffen, *"The New World Working-Class Suburb Revisited, Residential Differentiation in Caversham, New Zealand,"* Journal of Urban History, 2001, 423.

14 Ian Dougherty, *More Than Just a Place of Work: A History of Dunedin's Hillside Railway Workshops,* Wellington: New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society, 2015, 172.

15 Ibid, 173.

16 Karyn Paringatai, *Kua Riro ki Wīwī, ki Wāwā: The Causes and Effects of Māori Migration to Southland,* 2013, University of Otago, Dunedin, PhD thesis.

Megan Potiki

Megan hails from Ōtākou and is of Kāi Tahu and Te Ātiawa descent. Megan has spent the last several years at the University of Otago as a Lecturer for Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies, now in the Office of Māori Development and working towards completing her PhD. Her research interests are focused on the loss of te reo Māori at Ōtākou and the written Māori archives of the past that have a particular geographical focus on her tribal region of Kāi Tahu in the South Island of New Zealand.

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