

**A Tribute to Te Rangi Pumamao Reweti Rongorongo in Celebration of the 50th
Anniversary of the Opening of the Parewahawaha Marae, Bulls, New Zealand,
April 2017**

Mihimihi (greeting)

Ko Aotea te waka (canoe)

Ko Tongariro te maunga (mountain)

Ko Rangitikei te awa (river)

Ko Ohinepuhiawe te whenua (land)

Ko Parewahawaha te wharetupuna (ancestral home)

Ko Hare Reweti Rongorongo te tupuna (ancestor)

Ko Te Rangi Pumamao Reweti Rongorongo te tangata, toku kaumatua (chief & g/father)

Ko Arohanui toku kuia (grandmother)

Ko Oma Reweti Rongorongo Cribb Heitia toku whaea (mother)

Ko Anthony Cribb toku papa (father)

Ko Hinepounamu Stella Coram taku ingoa (me)

Tihei mauri ora! (Breathe life).

Kia ora tatou:

In this korero (address), I wish to acknowledge not only tupuna (ancestors) Hare Reweti Rongorongo and his wife Rakapa Te Rongo but also my mother Oma Reweti Rongorongo, Kaumatua (elder). But, it is to my grandfather, Te Rangi Pumamao Reweti Rongorongo (RR) to whom I wish to pay special tribute – so as to reaffirm his mana as rangatira (chief) to our ancestral lands – Ohinepuhiawe (in the Rangitikei-Manawatu of the North Island of New Zealand) – and to the magnificent whare-tupuna (ancestral meeting house) he named Parewahawaha in honour of his great, great, grandmother, chieftain-ness Parewahawaha.

It is essential that I do so in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the official opening of Parewahawaha, to remember the place of Reweti Rongorongo as tangata whenua (people of the land) of Ohinepuhiawe. Citing Anderson, Binney and Harris's (2015) *Tangata Whenua: A History* I draw attention to the importance of tangata whenua as a central organising principle within Maori culture and society. According to Anderson et al, genealogical proximity to a particular line of descent determined rules of seniority. They distinguish between direct descent and indirect or lateral descent. Needless to say, Te Rangi Pumamao RR succeeded to a direct line in seniority of descent from tupuna.

In the context of tribal descent, and ownership of land, Williams observed in the *Dictionary of Maori Language* first published in 1844 that 'tangata whenua are the people who descend from the first people to settle the land'. Thus, at a given marae (ancestral meeting place), the tangata whenua are the owners of the marae.

In this light, I wish to emphasise the significance of Reweti Rongorongo, which originates in the migration of the Te Arawa iwi (tribe) on board the waka (canoe), Aotea, from Hawaiki to Aotearoa. Rongorongo, the daughter of the Chief Toto, was married to Turi, the commander of the Aotea. The Ngati Apa, of Te Arawa descent, were the first to settle in the Rangitikei-Manawatu. Thus, the primacy of Reweti Rongorongo, which means god of peace was passed from the Aotea through Ngati Apa, unbroken, to my grandfather. This means that Reweti Rongorongo whanau (extended family) are the tangata whenua of Ohinepuhiawe, whenua (land) upon which Parewahawaha was built. In saying so, this does not displace members of the Parewahawaha hapu (subtribe) to whom we are related. It is merely intended to establish who is entitled to mana, to hold the mantle of authority, and that is Reweti Rongorongo.

It is important to note that Te Rangi Pumamao also descends from the distinguished ancestor Raukawa. I refer to this because there are people, claiming ancestry to Raukawa, who assume authority (mana) over Parewahawaha Marae, the name of which comes from Raukawa.

My grandfather Te Rangi Pumamao RR (2nd) was named after Te Rangi Pumamao the 1st, rangatira of Te Arawa and Tuwharetoa, who married Parewahawaha, his second wife. Te Rangi Pumamao the 1st was, I suggest, senior to Parewahawaha. My grandfather's mother was Ani Kanara and his father Kereopa Ngatiaehura Rongorongo, the youngest son of Hare RR and Rakapa Te Rongo, whom I have not spoken about though she too was of senior lines.

It was Te Rangi Pumamao RR the 2nd who had the authority and named the marae Parewahawaha in honour of his grandmother. He also named my youngest sister Parewahawaha. However, his status and authority as rangatira is persistently misrepresented or denied on the ground of 'conquest' of Ngati Apa by Raukawa. There were indeed battles in which Ngati Apa were defeated by the paramount Ngati Toa Chief Te Rauparaha, and his Raukawa allies. Overlooked though is the fact that Ngati Apa were never displaced.

Misrepresentation of 'conquest' goes back to the great heke (migration) from the central North Island south to the Rangitikei (Ohinepuhiawe) commenced in 1827 under Te Rauparaha. Migration was to significantly alter re-settlement of the Rangitikei district in the years following though not in a way that weakened or diminished the mana of Ngati Apa irrespective of 'conquest'. But rather in ways that strengthened iwi connections through intermarriage. As my mother pointed out in her Korero Tuku Iho presentation to the Waitangi Tribunal in 2013, rangatira alliances were formed through marriage between Ngati Apa and Raukawa.

Rangihaeta, the nephew of Te Rauparaha married Te Piinga (Ngati Apa)

Aperehama Te Huruhuru (Raukawa) married Wikitoria (Ngati Apa)

Wikitoria also descends from Raukawa through Toia, the fourth son of Parewahawaha. Their daughter Riria was first married to Whatanui, the grandson of Parewahawaha.

Let it be clear, as Anderson and Pickens point out in *Rangahaua Whanui District 12* (1989) that Te Rauparaha upheld the dominion of Ngati Apa. They did not lose their land. Rather, Raukawa settled on the south bank of the Rangitikei River whereas Ngati Apa remained settled on the north bank of the Rangitikei.

Let it be clear too that we descend from Te Rauparaha. Te Rangi Pumamao 2nd married Arohanui Te Ta Hiwi McClennon. Arohanui descends from Te Rauparaha from his marriage to

first wife Marore. Te Rangi Pumamao, himself, descends from Te Rauparaha, on his father Werawera's side. As indicated, Maori genealogy (whakapapa) distinguishes between senior and secondary as well as between direct and indirect lines of descent from ancestors. Many of our detractors within the hapu (subtribe) of Parewahawaha descend from the noble Nepia Taratoa, a nephew of Te Rauparaha, and are therefore not of a direct or senior line to Te Rauparaha as is the case for Te Rangi Pumamao RR.

This is important because the role of Chief is an onerous one. Anderson et al (2014) observe that the utmost task of the Chief was to defend mana whenua. A humble man, my grandfather did what was required of him as Chief quietly and purposefully. He understood the obligations before him in safeguarding Ohinepuhiawe whenua (land).

My grandfather lived up to his name. Rongo is the moko of peace that informs the papakainga – a place for all – established by him, Hare Rongorongo, and their cousin Raunatia, my much-loved Aunty Lorna, who together successfully petitioned the Maori Land Court in the late 1940s. As we know it was nearly 20 years before the vision of my grandfather was completed. He took his place and presided as tangata whenua on the day of the great opening in April 1967 which we now celebrate 50 years later.

Quite apart from the visceral beauty of Parewahawaha, its unique merging of Ngati Apa, Te Arawa, Tuwharetoa, Raukawa and Tainui people, among others, can be seen as illustrative of its principal standing as a marae (meeting place) in Aotearoa New Zealand. But, alas, this is in part why the mana of Parewahawaha, and Ohinepuhiawe land upon which it resides, is sought after by those who deny the place of Reweti. This is underscored by misrepresentation of 'conquest' (by Raukawa) which was deemed insignificant by the Crown, for instance, if not recognised by title. Hare Reweti Rongorongo held title. Hare was one of three principals, beside Te Rauparaha and Aperehama Te Huruhuru, to sign the 1849 sale of the Rangitoto (Block XI). That said, we are Raukawa and therefore reserve the right to claim dual rights on the basis of discovery and settlement as well as 'conquest'.

My estimation is that my grandfather shouldered the burden of responsibility on his own especially following the untimely death of his wife Arohanui at age 37 leaving him to raise his children during a period of immeasurable grief. He was vulnerable and suffered indignities the ramifications of which reverberate through the hapu today. He was alienated from his own domain but the hapu realising its folly called him back to finish and to preside as he did.

My grandfather was a visionary. He welcomed pakeha to marae at a time when this was not done beginning with students from Victoria University. This paved the way for professional development of government agencies in relation to cultural awareness and the treatment of Maori institutionally. That was just the beginning with Parewahawaha welcoming Air Force personnel from across the globe based at Ohakea including the US. This is part of the greatness of Parewahawaha, a taonga (gift) not just for the hapu but for the nation and the globe.

He also paved the way for a promising young anthropologist to make her mark in her field at a time when convention dictated that doors be closed to outsiders especially women. And he showed his courage in sheltering protesters against the Crown in their march to Wellington when few would oblige them. That march led to landmark legislation, the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975, which allowed for establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal, the body responsible for preparing claims against the Crown for breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi 1840.

He was a man of dignity and was greatly respected by all. This is evident by the fact that he was the first Maori to be elected to the Bulls County Town Committee in 1968. Laurenson in *Rangitikei: The Days of Striding Out* (1979: 38) refers to him as the 'district elder of the Parewahawaha sub-tribe who took a leading part in the early plans for the Maori meeting house at Bulls Marae'. He was clearly comfortable in both the Maori and Pakeha worlds. However, his passing in 1978 created a vacuum into which others have over stepped.

I was in London when I received the news of his passing via telegram from my Aunty Christina (Paretawhiti) as I was about to embark on a twelve-week tour of Europe with my then partner. I packed up instead and headed straight back to Bulls. Following my grandfather's tangihanga, there was a meeting to elect a new chairman, which I attended. In response to nominations, my late uncle Hone (affectionately known as Uncle Boy), tuakana to my mother and aunties, declared to my surprise that he did not want the responsibility and then handed the reigns to my mother with the words 'Oma can do it'. Then and there, she succeeded to her father as Kaumatua. Her name was submitted for ballot. There was a draw with the deciding vote going against my mother. I got up from the table and walked out in protest.

An induction for my mother. She was placed in a position of having to step into the vacuum, as it were. Nonetheless, she has stood and has withstood, for too long, unedifying conduct to deny her justice. Without my realising it at the time, the meeting was the genesis for unfounded claims to mana whenua to follow.

My grandfather's generosity of spirit has been mistaken for weakness – a cause to encroach where one ought not to. It is extraordinary to me that people do not know their place. And, it is extraordinary to me that people who profess the eloquence of Maori culture, and all that this represents, can then so casually disregard principles of Tikanga Maori, or selectively interpret Tikanga, to suit their interests. I will not make the same mistake twice as I did in 1978 by walking out. Instead, I speak the truth. There is no other time to do this than now when it matters most.

Te Rangi Pumamao RR was a chief in every sense of the word. Few possess his bearing befitting the mana of a chief. I attest to him: A man of peace, vision, and humility. It is my express wish that his photo remains untouched in its rightful place to preside over Parewahawaha.

I live in Australia being married to an Australian. But, the magnificent wharetupuna Parewahawaha is my spiritual home and Ohinepuhiawe the land to whom I belong. I was in attendance in 1968 when students from Victoria University first experienced being on a marae. I was married at Parewahawaha in 1986. I returned to Parewahawaha to farewell my brother Mataoara in 1995 and my tuakana Wikitoria in 1998.

Parewahawaha is a place of honour and peace. I intend from here on to return on a regular basis to ensure that the mana whenua of my grandfather is upheld. 'Tena koe dear Koko'.

No reira, kahuri ki te kanohi ora (therefore, flock to face life)

Tena koutau, tena koutau, tena koutau katoa (greetings to all).