



TUIA
250

KI TE WHANGANUI
O HEI
MERCURY BAY



Tuia – Encounters 250 and Te Pōwhiri

FOUNDATION DOCUMENT

For over 1,000 years, Pacific navigators travelled across the largest of the world's oceans exploring, making connections, trading, discovering and settling in lands such as Aotearoa/New Zealand. A "dense and well preserved cultural landscape" on Ahuahu/Great Mercury Island reveals evidence of an organised civilisation which radiocarbon dates back to the late 1400s.¹

Led by the British, during the 18th century European age of enlightenment, Cook, in command of HM Bark *Endeavour*, made the first of his epic journeys to Aotearoa. On board were scientists Banks, Solander and Green, and a Polynesian linguist, navigator and priest – Tupaia – who joined the *Endeavour* in Tahiti.²

¹ Auckland Museum website, Great Mercury Island expedition (<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/research-projects/great-mercury-island-expedition/learn-about-the-project>, 26 September 2018).

² Personal communication, Richard Gates, November 2, 2018.

Tuia – Encounters 250 marks the 250th anniversary of the first onshore encounters between Māori and Europeans. Regional commemorations are being developed and delivered by four charitable trusts in the four parts of Aotearoa where Māori and Europeans first met onshore during the 1768-71 voyage:

- Te Hā 1769 Sestercentennial Trust in Tairāwhiti/Gisborne
- Mercury 250th Anniversary Trust in Te Whanganui o Hei/Mercury Bay
- Te Au Mārie 1769 Sestercentennial Charitable Trust in Te Tai Tokarau/Bay of Islands
- Totaranui 250 Trust in Totaranui/Marlborough

In October and November 2019 commemoration ceremonies will be held in these four landing sites of the *Endeavour* around Aotearoa – Tairāwhiti/Gisborne; Te Whanganui o Hei/Mercury Bay; Te Tai Tokerau/Bay of Islands; and Totaranui/Marlborough. The forward-looking commemorations, a Tier 1 national event, will support a stronger sense of Aotearoa’s national identity and cohesion, and promote the value of cultural diversity. We acknowledge these meetings to better understand our dual heritage, our complex history of migration and settlement, to look at who “we”, as Kiwis, are today and, importantly, who we can be in the future.

Tuia – Encounters 250 is also an opportunity to recognise the exceptional feats of Pacific/Māori and European voyaging that brought our cultures together, and to reflect on our histories of migration and settlement.

Like the first meetings of our two great voyaging traditions, New Zealand’s history and our journey together as a dual culture has been remarkable; but also complex, difficult and, at times, extremely painful. *Tuia – Encounters 250* is an opportunity for our stories to be told with balance and honesty and heard with generosity of spirit; an opportunity to look objectively at the nature of our 250 year-old bi-culture and to plan together for our shared future.

Dual Heritage, Shared Future

presenting a balanced and honest history to better understand each other,
and to build a strong foundation for a shared future

The many and diverse communities in Aotearoa share a common bond as voyagers to this land and as kaitiaki (guardians) of its well-being and its stories. In 2019 we will come together to remember, to listen and to reflect on our heritage. *Tuia – Encounters 250* allows us to refresh our view of ourselves as a nation so that we can move confidently towards a richer shared future.

The commemoration uses a Māori name (*Tuia*) and European concept of time and commemoration (Encounters 250).



Tuia means ‘to weave or bind together’ and is drawn from a whakataukī (proverb) and karakia (ritual chant) that refers to the intangible bonds established between people when they work together.

The logo references waka hourua (double-hulled voyaging canoes) and tall ship rigging, Pacific binding, raranga (weaving), the shape of a hull and the interlacing of our dual heritage. The key font used in the logo ‘Bodoni’ was designed in the late 18th century and was seen at that time to embody the future and ‘the rational thinking of the Enlightenment.’³

³ *Tuia – Encounters 250* website (<https://mch.govt.nz/tuia-encounters-250>, 26 September 2018)

Tuia karakia

Kia whakarongo ake au	I listen
Ki te tangi a te manu nei	To the cry of the bird
A te Mātūī	The Mātūī
“Tūī, tūī, tuituia”	Calling “tūī, tūī, tuituia”
Tuia i runga	That it be woven above
Tuia i raro	As it is below
Tuia i waho	Woven without
Tuia i roto	As it is within
Tuia i te here tāngata	Interwoven with the threads of humanity
Ka rongo te pō	Felt in innocence
Ka rongo te ao	And in consciousness
Tuia i te muka tāngata	Intertwined with the threads of humankind
I takea mai i Hawaiki-Nui	Born from Great-Hawaiki
I Hawaiki-Roa, i Hawaiki-Pāmamao	From Far-Hawaiki, from Long-Distant-Hawaiki
Oti rā me ērā atu anō Hawaiki	And hence all other Hawaiki
Te hono a wairua	The merging of spirits
Whakaputa ki Te Whaiao	Out in to the World of Light
Ki Te Ao Mārama	Life, knowledge, and illumination
Tihe mauri ora!	Sneeze oh living spirit, dynamic life-force, life-principle!

Te Pōwhiri Te Whanganui o Hei/Mercury Bay

Tuia: *to weave or bind together; also refers to the intangible bonds established between people when we work together*

Pōwhiri: *invitation, rituals of encounter, welcome ceremony on a marae, welcome*⁴



Haere Mai!

... we saw the inhabitants of the other [heppah – pa] come down from it, men, women and children, about one hundred in number, and march towards us; as soon as they came near enough they wav'd, and called haromai, and sat down in the bushes near the beach (a sure mark of their good intentions). We went to them, made a few presents, and asked leave to go up to their heppah, which they with joy invited us to do, and immediately accompanied us to it. It was called Wharretoueva ...



Joseph Banks (The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks 1768–1771 [Volume One] November 1769, p. 432.)

During 2019 and 2020 (and beyond), spearheaded by Mercury 250 Trust, Te Whanganui o Hei/Mercury Bay will commemorate *Tuia – Encounters 250*. Our community's expression of *Tuia – Encounters 250* will be called *Te Pōwhiri*, recognising the decision made by mana whenua, Ngati Hei, to (undoubtedly very cautiously and watchfully) welcome and embrace this visit by the white-skinned newcomers who arrived in their waters in an enormous vessel, thought initially to be a huge bird; “as unexpected as a spaceship landing in your backyard today” says Joe Davis, Ngati Hei spokesperson and Mercury 250 Trust co-chair; and anchored it off the Purangi River at what is now known as Cook's Beach. This vessel was, of course, HM Bark *Endeavour*.

⁴ Pōwhiri – Maori Dictionary website (<https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?idiom=&phrase=&proverb=&loan=&histLoanWords=&keywords=powhiri>, 26 September 2018)

Through Tupaia, a Polynesian navigator, priest and a linguist on board the Endeavour, communication between Te Whanganui o Hei mana whenua (Ngati Hei, Rakawera, Manukarere, Tinirau and Whakaruku) and the Europeans was possible because of the similarities between the Māori and Tahitian languages.

After a few days' close observation of one another and successful trade encounters, an incident – possibly a misunderstanding during a trade – occurred which resulted in the shooting of a Māori by one of Cook's crew. At that point, rather than seek retribution for the death of an iwi member, the decision was made by mana whenua that the punishment (death) befitted the crime (perceived theft).⁵

It was also decided that Ngati Hei's rangatira (chief), Toawaka⁶, should invite the Europeans ashore at their turangawaewae (place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa), Wharekaho, with the traditional Māori ritual of welcome, the Pōwhiri, to diffuse the tension caused by the shooting, and to restore the successful trade of items and exchange of knowledge.

Plans for this visit were made through Tupaia, and Toawaka guaranteed the safe passage of the Europeans from the calm waters of the north end of Wharekaho Beach (where they landed their pinnace and yawl) along the foreshore to Wharetāewa Pa at the south end where the Davis Homestead/Te Papakāinga stands today.

Wisely, Toawaka alerted the Europeans that parts of the Pōwhiri involve a challenge – the wero – which could easily be read by the newcomers as imminent attack, and again reassured them that they were safe.

At this point we must acknowledge Ngati Hei for sharing this and many other stories. This information is from Ngati Hei oral tradition and history, including previously unpublished material.⁷

The result: at Wharetāewa in 1769, we see the symbolic first encounters between two worlds in the Māori ritual of welcome, Pōwhiri. And taking our lead from the grace of Ngati Hei in 1769, Mercury 250 Trust has named our community's Tuia 250 commemorations *Te Powhiri*.

But what is a Pōwhiri? What is its meaning? In its simplest contemporary form, it is a ritual of welcoming visitors from afar for birthdays, weddings, meetings of various kinds and other community events.

However Māori language and rituals abound in metaphor and the Pōwhiri has meanings on many other levels. At its essence, a pōwhiri ritualises the movement from conflict (represented by 'te pō' or darkness) to resolution (light, Te Ao Mārama). It is a ritual re-enactment of the Māori creation story, similar to mythologically/religiously based rituals throughout the world, which tells of the 'separation' of earth and sky and the bringing of light into the world, into the darkness. A practical example of this is moving from darkness in the form of grief when a loved one passes away, to a reconciliation with their passing, hence the significance of Pōwhiri at tangihanga (funerals) on marae.⁸

"Well yes" says Joe Davis, "the Pōwhiri is a ritual of welcome, and it is also a metaphor symbolising shifts from one state to another, but really when that taki (challenge) is thrown down, the fundamental question it is asking of the manuhiri (visitor) is 'are you friend or foe?'"

We can then consider the meaning of Pōwhiri in relation to *Tuia – Encounters 250*: the ritualisation of a safe passage from the challenges and conflict which our two cultures have, and often still do, face; to reconciliation, understanding, acceptance, respect; the weaving together of our differing cultures and values into a future we will be proud to leave for our grandchildren.

This – Dual Heritage, Shared Future – is the meaning and the purpose of *Te Pōwhiri* and *Tuia – Encounters 250*.

⁵ Personal communication, Joe Davis, Ngati Hei spokesperson, November 9, 2018

⁶ Call also Toiava or Toeawa in most other previous published histories, personal communication, John Steele, November 5, 2018

⁷ Personal communication, John Steele, November 5, 2018

⁸ Personal communication, Dr Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, August 9, 2018