



TE KAAHU O TUAWHENUA



Issue December 2020

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Te Kaahu o Tuawhenua is an annual publication that presents the activities and research of the Tuawhenua Trust, in particular those undertaken with Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research.

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SUPPORTED BY



LANDCARE RESEARCH
MANAAKI WHENUA

“E ngā pakiaka haere whenua, tēnei te tangi kōrihi a Te Tuawhenua me Manaaki Whenua ki a koutou katoa kia rarau mai ki ōna pūrongo mo tēnei tau 2020.”

Well what a year! 2020 with Covid-19 lockdown and economic turmoil affecting everything we do. It couldn't have ended more badly or sadly with the passing of our trustee Korotau Tamiana. Korotau became a trustee over 20 years ago and was instrumental in the forest and matauranga research we have delivered over these years.

In this edition, we report on a number of initiatives advanced in 2020 although some research as a whole was affected from the Covid-19 lockdown.



Korotau Tamiana, doing what he always did so well, teaching others about the life in the bush that he lived and learnt from his elders. Here he is explaining the mapara, used as torch in days of yesteryear.



Tūhoe Tuawhenua Trust in 2020

WHO'S INVOLVED

Trustees of the Tuawhenua: Richard Tūmarae (Interim Chair), Hekenoa Te Kurapa, Tāne Rua, Brenda Tahī (Executive Trustee)

TE KAUPAPA O TE TUAWHENUA

The Trust is now at the end of its third strategic plan that took us to 2020. We remain focused on our long term goals of Te Iwi me Te Whenua (developing our land and people); Kaitiakitanga (protection and enhancement of Tuawhenua ecosystems); Te Mātauranga me te Tūhonohono (Knowledge and Networks).

Most of the past year has been focused on dealing with the impacts of Covid-19 but some key goals were also advanced:

- Creating new roles and training new and current staff into these roles.
- Publishing the documentaries on kereru - Te Kura Huna o Te Urewera
- Partnering in a number of research projects with research agencies and institutes
- Advancing Te Whare o Rehua with programmes about pest impacts and control, all aspects about te tuna (eels) and a journey tracing the history and bush life of our ancestors.
- Gaining funding to build a new food production hub that will be focused in the initial stages as a packhouse for the honey.
- Contributing where we can to networks in research and other endeavours, locally, nationally and overseas.

THE PEOPLE: JOB CREATION & TRAINING

Our researcher Puke Tīmoti continued his studies this year and research with Manaaki Whenua. He now works half-time with Manaaki Whenua based in Hamilton, whilst remaining a researcher half-time for

the Tuawhenua.

In the office, Karioi White is now full-time in a multi-faceted role covering inventory control, packing and dispatch of orders, logistics, label design and administrative support for Te Whare o Rehua programme. Marama Huiarangi has moved into digital marketing for her development covering our social media, imagery, website design and administration.

Slaine Rangiahua started with us in 2020 as a research fieldworker for the More Birds in the Bush project. Jim Tahī is developing as a project manager for the building of our packhouse. And based in Christchurch, Donna Hatcher has come on board to focus on marketing for Manawa Honey NZ.

NETWORKING AND CONTRIBUTION

Puke Tīmoti has continued to contribute to policy development through various Ministerial appointments and policy initiatives. Puke was a key contributor to the development of Te Mana o Te Taiao: Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020, and was recently appointed to the New Zealand Conservation Authority. These are outstanding achievements that recognise Puke's background, his knowledge and his ability to be effective in policy-making processes.

With Covid-19 limiting travel, more networking was done by webinar in 2020 than ever before. Webinar technology allows us here in Ruatahuna to reach out beyond our region, indeed across the world, in ways that many had not embraced in the past. In November, Brenda Tahī presented Manawa Honey and the Tuawhenua Trust as a case study to The Hirshberg Entrepreneurship Institute of the United States held as a webinar programme. Our story gained some real interest that we are now following up on.





Above: It's August 2020 and Puke Timoti takes his place in the New Zealand Conservation Authority. This Authority is chaired by Edward Ellison of Ngai Tahu (centre) and its members, all from different parts of the country, are appointed by the Minister of Conservation. The Authority is a national statutory body that provides strategic policy advice to the Department of Conservation and the Minister of Conservation. (Photo: DOC website)

Below: It's November 2020 and Brenda Tahi is presenting our case study by webinar to the Hirshberg Institute in the US and participants across New Zealand. The case study struck a real chord with the US business experts, who took a particular interest in the back story of the Tuawhenua - people and land development, forest research and restoration, self-determination by indigenous people. Webinar technology during Covid lockdown worked very much to our advantage, enabling us to reach out across the world in fora such as this. (Photo: Brendan Hoare)



Te Whare o Rehua

WHO'S INVOLVED

Tūhoe Tuawhenua Trust: Taawi Te Kurapa (Tutor and Trustee), Brenda Tahi (Project Director and Trustee), Karioi White (Project Support), Puke Timoti (Tutor and Researcher).

Te Whare o Rehua continued to develop in 2020 despite lockdown and Covid-19 risks closing the programme for much of the year. Just two programmes were completed before lockdown then another is planned as we go to print.

In January 2020, Te Waaka Howden led a programme that focused on pest impacts and control in our forests, with particular emphasis on possums. Participants learnt about different pests and how they are destructive to our forest bird life. This programme also completed a trap-line for possums, and collected fur that was then sold and the proceeds divided up with the participants.

In February, Anthony (Chico) Te Kurapa led out a programme on tuna that made the journey to the head waters of the Waiau River. Participants learnt many aspects of eeling, including how to make a gaff and catching and preparing them for a meal.

And in December 2020, Puke Timoti led out a horse trek to Pukareao in “Nga Tapuwae o Nga Tipuna (Tracing the Footprints of Our Ancestors)”. The programme included horse preparation and riding, te kereru, te whakarapu tuna, making camp, and the history of the region.

Kaipupuri korero are the inspiration for Te Whare o Rehua and we salute you all for your leadership of our programmes in this time. This is what Te Whare o Rehua is all about—transferring korero from our experts and elders to the next generations so that the knowledge and practices of our forest way of life is never lost.



All eyes are just where you want them to be when you're teaching safety in handling a gun. Te Waaka Howden takes these lads through gun safety on the programme for pest control in January 2020. By that night the group were out with Te Waaka spotting possums and hares. (Photo: Kaahui TeRire)





Top left: Hohepa Howden sets a trap ready for catching possums. Their trap-line took the group up to Tahuroa, a favourite ridge for possuming undertaken by Hohepa's forefathers.



Below left: Ocean Howden and Crystal TeRire-Matekuare pluck the fur of one of the possums caught on the trap line. Ocean keenly went possuming after the programme was over – just what we want our participants to do!

Below: The programme designed by Te Waaka Howden for Te Whare o Rehua on pests emphasised the impact of pests on our forest as the rationale for keeping numbers down. The group learnt how to trap possums by day and spot them by night. Here, Te Waaka takes the group out at night to apply their learnings on gun safety and shooting in using a gun to spot possums and hares.

(Photos: Kaahui TeRire)





Above: Tahae Doherty starts off the programme in December 2020 by explaining the strategic significance of Ngaputahi historically, as a crossroads by which Tuhoë reached other parts of the North Island. Tahae also covered how his ancestors travelled through the bush with little in their packs, simply living off the bounty of the rivers and the forest of the region. This programme was led by Puke Timoti, at right.

Below: This programme took a journey by horse back from Papueru to Ngaputahi on State Highway 38 over to Ngahiramaï on the Whakatane River and back up to Mataatua in Ruatahuna. It was called Nga Tapuwae o Nga Tipuna as it traced pathways used by our ancestors in traversing the region of the Tuawhenua.



Manawa Honey NZ

WHO'S INVOLVED

Hekenoa Te Kūrapa (Trustee and Beekeeping Operations); Brenda Tahī (Trustee and Export Markets);

BEEKEEPING OPERATIONS

The harvest in 2020 was a good one, but with honey prices dropping, we decided some of the crop was better off left on the hives for the bees. Covid-19 lockdown brought some challenges for the beekeeping operation. As an essential service, we were expected, and indeed needed, to carry on operations. Accordingly we made the adjustments necessary to maintain staff health and safety, and continued our operation throughout that time.

MARKETING MANAWA HONEY

In 2020, the closing of New Zealand's borders affected sales—no tourists to buy our honey. In response to this change, we have ratcheted up our e-commerce and social media efforts, and pursued export opportunities with renewed vigour.

The focused training in e-commerce has been a major development for staff in the Manawa office, and some results from this investment are beginning to show. We have also brought to market a range of healing skincare products using Manuka Honey—a major milestone for us.

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It's all go for the harvest in 2020. There's beekeepers checking hives for disease, there's boxes of honey ready to be cleared of bees, and there's boxes of honey harvested up on the truck ready to bring back to base for extraction. The harvest in 2020 was a good one for us and for beekeepers across the country but the market for non-manuka honey has slumped so it's a tough time for many. (Photo: Kaahui TeRire)





Left: The Covid-19 crisis hit China well before it reached us here in New Zealand. Our friends in China reached out to help us when they knew Covid-19 impacts had reached us here in Ruatahuna, sending us supplies of masks that were for a time so hard to get. Their kindness in such a challenging time was greatly appreciated and we promptly sent off some honey as a token of thanks. Here, Guosong Liu, who organised the gift of masks, shows his appreciation for our Pua-a-Tane Honey, in his office for the International Mountain Tourism Association based in Beijing. And below left, staff member Karioi White shows off the face masks that we were so glad to receive at the time.



Below: Our product range was presented in special combinations for gifts at Christmas 2020. New products added in this last year were part of a skincare range using manuka honey and manuka oil as key ingredients – a healing skin balm, and handcrafted soaps. We will work on extension of this range in 2021.

This photo is one of many that has been taken for us by Marama Huiarangi who took up a training opportunity in photography held in Murupara early in 2020 with experts from National Geographic. Since then she has been taking some great images of our products, people and activities and continues to further develop her skill.



Scholarship Awards in 2020

Shaun Toroa Te Rire McNeil was awarded the Manaaki Whenua Scholarship in 2020. This scholarship is funded by Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research and administered by the Tuawhenua Trust. Shaun is part of the Te Rire whanau and appreciates the opportunity to be able to link back to his roots here in Ruatahuna.

Shaun completed a Bachelor of Science with a chemistry major in 2019 at the University of Waikato. He is currently studying for a Masters of Science (Research) and is engaged in research that is assessing the chemical composition and properties of propolis from different sources,

including from our hives at Manawa Honey! We're thrilled to be working with Shaun on this project.

Ivoga Tarei Rangihau was awarded the Tuhoe Tuawhenua Scholarship in 2020. Ivoga has an Indigenous Art Weavers qualification and is currently studying further in raranga under a programme with Rose Ratana - Pa Harakeke ki te Tangata, Pu Harakeke ki te Whenua, covering ture relating to harakeke and the art of raranga.

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Right: Shaun McNeil has been an outstanding student, gaining special awards at the University of Waikato for outstanding academic achievement in 2017 and 2019. Connecting with the Tuawhenua is important to Shaun, as he says "The connection to the Tuawhenua is something I wish to nurture and grow. I also hope that with the skill set I have, my mahi could produce something beneficial for the Tuawhenua.



More Birds in the Bush Research

WHO'S INVOLVED

*Tūhoe Tuawhenua Trust: Brenda Tahī,
Tāhae Doherty, Puke Timoti*

*Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research:
Adrian Monks, Jo Carpenter, Phil Lyver, Susan
Walker*

*Auckland University: Bruce Burns, Oscar
Clendon*

Manaaki Whenua and the “More Birds in the Bush” research program are partnering with the Tūhoe Tuawhenua Trust on several research projects linked to restoring kererū in Tuawhenua forests. Since the initiation of our collaborative projects a year ago, we have been busy getting field projects off the ground.

The first field project aims to understand the role of rats and possums on the availability of kai (particularly fruit) for kererū. While we know something about the combined effect of possums and rats on fruit crops, we don't know the effect of having one or the other. This is important because while possums are relatively easy to control for long periods of time, ship rats are not and will often bounce back within months to even higher numbers than previous, following combined rat and possum control. Puke Timoti, Slaine Rangiahua, Jo Carpenter and Morgan Coleman spent some long, hot days in the bush in March, setting up 240 seed traps that will collect fruitfall from toromiro and other plant species. Slaine and Puke have been collecting the seed trap samples

*Right: Puke Timoti
carefully slides a 30
cm long tawa tree
core into a plastic
straw for safe keeping.
The core may cover
over 100 years of tawa
growth rings, each
holding information
about the
environmental
conditions in the year
it was formed.*



(every month) and estimating rat and possum numbers (every 6 months) since then. For the next year, we'll count how much fruit is produced when rats and possums are abundant. Once we have an idea of the baseline fruit abundances, we'll control rats, possums or both at certain sites, to see which of these actions lead to big increases in the availability of food for kererū.

The second field project aims to understand why the quality and quantity of tawa fruit have declined in Tuawhenua forests over recent decades. Are drying forests the reason? Recently, Puke Timoti, Adrian Monks, Jo Carpenter, and Auckland University Masters student Oscar Clendon put their biceps to the test taking tree cores from thirty tawa trees across the Tuawhenua lands. Taking these 5 mm diameter cores from the trees does not

hurt them as the trees quickly seal off the cavity. Half the sampled trees are in logged forests with few podocarps, and half are in unlogged forests with podocarps. By looking at the tree rings and their chemical signatures over time, we hope to determine whether tawa has undergone increased drought stress in recent decades, and whether that is related to logging changing the forest structure. The findings from this study will be paired with measurements of tawa fruit production across Tuawhenua and wider Aotearoa to understand how any changes in droughtiness of the Tuawhenua forests might be impacting tawa fruit production.

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Left: Puke Timoti and Slaine Rangiahua set up a seed trap beneath a female toromiro tree at Ngaputahi. The seed trap will collect a proportion of the toromiro fruit crop.



Korotau Tamiana

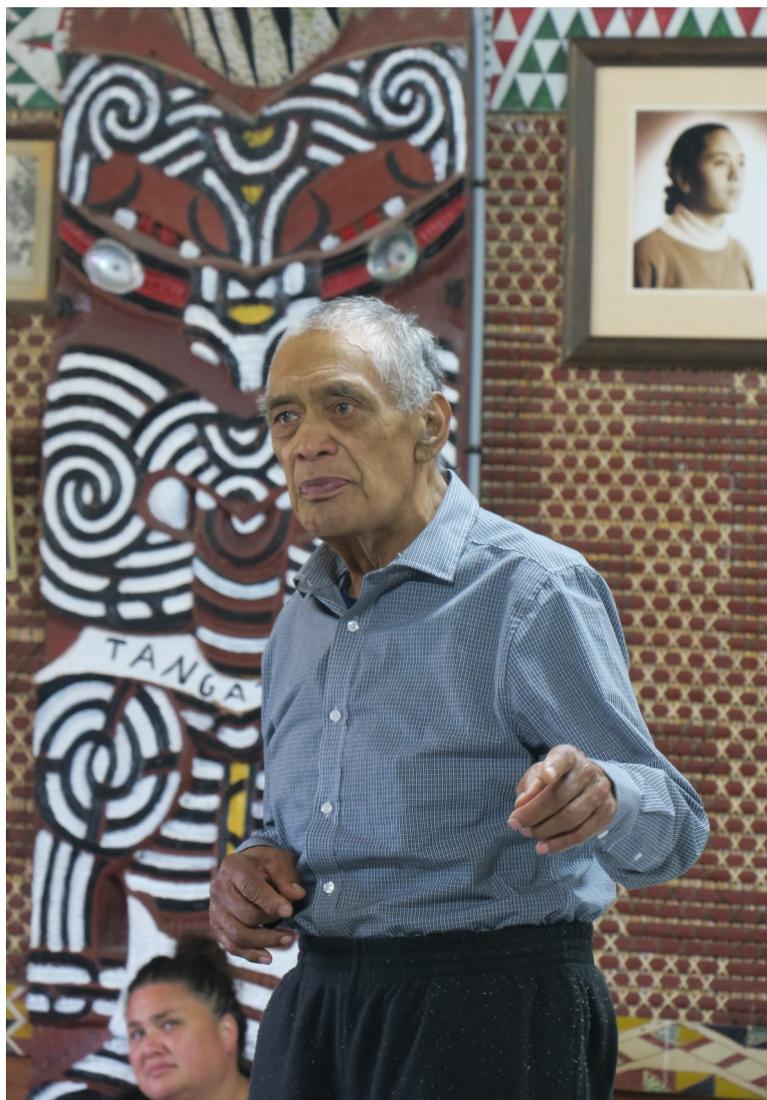
Korotau Tamiana, trustee for the Tuawhenua Trust for many years, passed on in November 2020. Korotau, also known as Basil, was raised by his elders in Ruatahuna and through his lifetime he amassed knowledge of people and the land of Te Urewera, that he was so generous in passing on to us all.

Bereft with his passing, we posted on Facebook:

Unmatched in your knowledge of Te Urewera, unwavering in your guidance and support for Tuawhenua, undone when you could no longer get to the bush you lived for. Korotau, te totara haemata o te waonui a Tane, ka mau tonu o korero matauranga me o tohutohu, a ka ngau tonu hoki te mamae mou kua hinga nei. Never another like you. Already missing your fearlessness, your straight up the guts, your aspirations and inspiration, your stories, your mischief, your wicked sense of humour, even your bawdy jokes and songs, your generosity, your love of life that you lived to the hilt. Your strident views and yes even the feisty debates. You sure never did things in halves Korotau....

Tuawhenua salutes you! Thank you for our 100-year Tumanako o Tuawhenua that slipped so easily off your tongue one day some years ago: "Kua tau te iwi me te whenua".

Seemingly simple but substantial. Like you.



Left: Tuawhenua trustee and forest expert Korotau Tamiana, puts his view on the documentaries about the kereru in the discussion held after the 2020 screening in Te Whai-a-te-motu Meeting House at Mataatua, Ruatahuna.

