

MAUNGATAPU

Maungatapu was an ancestral pā of Waitaha, stretching from the shores of the Waimapu River and covering a vast area around the inner harbour of Tauranga.

This was a strategic boundary of *Te Uku o Takakōpiri*. Maungatapu provided a route used by Waitaha to mount attacks during battle, and to travel to food gathering areas. This was later called the Waitaha Trail.

Takakōpiri, his grandson Kumaramaoa, his great-grandson Tāhū-whakatiki, and great, great-grandson Hikapa, all occupied Maungatapu.

Hikapa was a renowned leader and warrior. The saying, *Te Ika Hui Rua o Hikapa* refers to two Ngāi Te Rangi men who were killed by Hikapa alone. Another saying, *He whetu ngā kanohi, he maire ngā pakihwi*, described his ‘eyes that shone like stars’ and the ‘breadth of his shoulders’.

Hikapa and his descendants also occupied other pā, *Te Ōuwe*, *Te Puru* and *Te Tokitoki*. (These pā were abandoned by Waitaha following the land confiscations after the NZ Wars.)

Today the descendants of Hikapa form the people of Ngāti Hē who affiliate to Ngāi Te Rangi. Maungatapu is their principal marae.

Hikapa is the name of the tekoteko on the whareniui, Ranginui at Hairini Marae in Tauranga. Hairini stands on land that was originally held by Ngāti Te Awhai, a hapū of Waitaha. The lands were later taken over by Ngāti Te Ahi, who built Hairini pā during the 1800s.

Te Pā o Te Ariki and *Ōpopoti* were other Waitaha pā near Maungatapu.

Waitaha fought against Ngāpuhi in the early 1800s. Ngāti Rangiwewehi supported Waitaha and other Tauranga iwi defending Maungatapu Pā, but the pā fell to a combined force of Ngāpuhi and Te Arawa in 1836 at Te Tumu.