

Taonga - hope, fortitude, resilience and the survival of the spirit.



Ngāti Parewahawaha brought their taonga Parewahawaha along with a photograph of their koroua Peter Richardson who was one of the claimants for the major Ngāti Raukawa claim Wai 113.

The following description is from an assignment completed by Robbie Richardson, Uncle Peter's daughter. It was for her Master of Management.

Whether our taonga are tangible or intangible they make significant contributions to us as they enhance our lives in many different ways and for all occasions. Whether we wear them around our necks for protection or house them in our national museums, they are a constant reminder of our ancestral heritage and the higher power that we possess.

Our taonga continue to inspire and confront, they relax and soothe, they provoke and energize, they empower and sustain. They convey memories from the past and

make promises for the future. They represent hope, fortitude, resilience and the survival of the spirit.

Parewahawaha

This first taonga I will write about is a patu named Parewahawaha which is also the name of my hapū which derives from our eponymous tupuna Parewahawaha, a Ngāti Raukawa rangatira. The patu is a significant taonga of my people the Ngāti Parewahawaha, but very little is known on the true origin of the patu in relation to whether our tupuna Parewahawaha actually held the patu or whether it was fashioned after her death in her honour. However, despite this, it continues to enhance the mana and whanaungatanga of the whānau and hapū it represents.

For many years it was passed around from one whānau to another during times of tangihanga. As a whānau member passed away, the patu was passed on and would be placed with the tūpāpaku to provide comfort to the bereaved whānau. They would hold on to the taonga until the next tangihanga and once again the taonga would move to the bereaved whānau to soothe and comfort them.

According to John Reweti this patu was at one point housed at Ngātokowaru Marae which is near the Hokio stream about 6kms from Levin and it may have been there since the opening of their whare in 25th December 1900. There it was kept safe for many years by Ngāti Pareraukawa people until 1947 when it was taken north to Waitetoko Marae on the eastern shores of Lake Taupo and there it remained with the Tūwharetoa people for 20 years.

A year prior to the completion and opening of the Parewahawaha Memorial Meeting House in 1967, a hui took place with some of our most prominent Raukawa kaumātua which included the koroua Te Rangi Pumaomao. One of the issues on the agenda was to locate the patu, Parewahawaha, which was still up with the Tūwharetoa people and a request was made to Ta Hepi te Heuheu if he could assist with its return for the opening of the house.

The kōrero was also told to me by my Uncle Blondie (Blackmore) and my Dad Peter Richardson. On the morning of the opening ceremony Ngāti Tūwharetoa were present to tautoko the opening and at the forefront was Ta Hepi te Heuheu with the patu, Parewahawaha. This was to me a prime example of the mana enhancing role

that this taonga plays for our people, especially being returned by a paramount iwi leader. It also acknowledged our whakapapa and whanaungatanga between our people of Parewahawaha and the Tūwharetoa people.

Since the return home to Parewahawaha the patu has been housed at our marae and continues to assist our whānau in times of sorrow and times of celebration and to bring our whānau together whilst upholding the mana of the name and the people it represents.



PAREWAHAWAHA	DIMENSIONS	CHARACTERISTICS
Length	500 mm	
Width	170 mm	At the widest part of the patu
Thickness	30 mm	Blade like edge that thicken to 30 mm at the centre
Colour		Cream with dark brown streaks consistent with whale bone.
Shape		Tear drop shaped
Features		There are two chasms one on either side of the patu
Texture		The patu has a glossy finish that is smooth to the touch, very

		dense and obviously very strong texture
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