

# Te Kakara

Te Whare Kōrero o  
Raukawa

New Raukawa Housing  
Development

Waitangi Tribunal  
Appointment



Honouring Our Past,  
Strengthening Our Future





# RST Chair Message

*Tēnā Koutou Katoa*

As we embrace the season of ngahuru or autumn, we are reminded of the cycles of growth, change, and reflection that shape our journey as an iwi. This season marks a time of transition, of harvesting what has been sown and preparing for the cooler months ahead. Ngahuru invites us to pause, reflect, and recognise the accomplishments we have made together, as well as the work still to be done.

There have been many major developments for our iwi since our last pānuī, which will be touched on across the following pages.

A momentous occasion, where a large delegation of our iwi including our kaumātua, whānau and trustees travelled to Parliament to witness Te Pire mō Ō-Rākau, Te Pae o Maumahara / Ō-Rākau Remembrance Bill which became law on February 18 vesting the title of the 9.7-hectare battle site into a body representing the descendants of ngā tūpuna, as well as their whānau, hapū, and iwi. You can read about this historic event further in the pānuī.

Another highlight of this edition is the update on Te Whare Kōrero o Raukawa. The kaupapa continues to flourish as we reconnect with the whenua and our kōrero tuku iho. The hui at Mōkai Marae earlier this year was a testament to the resilience and commitment of our people. Our tamariki and rangatahi, guided by kaumātua and iwi leaders, are learning from the depth of our collective knowledge, ensuring that Te Whare Kōrero remains a living resource for generations to come. It is heartening to see how the kaupapa has evolved, touching on everything from wānanga around tikanga to revitalising our language through hands-on practice and kōrero.


We also celebrate the appointment of Vanessa Eparaima to the Waitangi Tribunal. This is a tremendous achievement, and we are extremely proud to see one of our own, someone deeply connected to Raukawa, taking on such an influential role. Vanessa's dedication to iwi development, governance, and Māori advocacy will serve the Tribunal and the broader Māori community with distinction.

Additionally, we acknowledge Louis Armstrong's role as a trustee at Ngātira Marae. Louis's journey, from his childhood days on the marae to his work with Raukawa Charitable Trust, exemplifies the importance of staying grounded in our values while embracing personal growth. His bold vision for our iwi's future, including the creation of a whakapapa book, is an inspiring step towards strengthening our connections to the whenua and our shared history.

We also welcome back Deb Davies as a marae representative for Pikitū, bringing valuable experience to the role.

As we continue to grow and learn, I encourage each of you to reflect on how we can collectively contribute to the wellbeing of our iwi and whānau. The foundation we build today is the legacy we leave for tomorrow.

**Nā Kataraina Hodge**  
*Raukawa Chairperson*

A close-up photograph of a person's hands, one above the other, holding a small amount of water. The hands are positioned over a shallow, rocky stream. The water is clear, and the rocks are dark and wet. The background is a blurred view of the stream and surrounding rocks. The text is overlaid on the image in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

# Tōmua te tangata, tōmuri te whenua

*This kōrero echoed throughout Manawapou during the time of Mātene Te Whiwhi, when our tūpuna made the pivotal decision to centralise our leadership under te pōtae o te motu. At its heart, the phrase reflects our deep commitment to the whenua.*

# Te Whare Kōrero o Raukawa 2025

## Ngā Manu Ora o te Iwi

Hoki mai te manu ora ki te rākau taumatua, ko te whare kōrero o Raukawa e kōkōu nei i te kāinga. Nō te Hanuere, huihui atu ai ngā uri o Raukawa ki roto i Te Pae o Raukawa, ki runga o Mōkai Marae, hei whakaara anō i te mauri o tā tātou kaupapa o Te Whare Kōrero o Raukawa. I tīmata mai te kaupapa nei hei kura reo ā-iwi, nā wai, nā wai, ka whanake haere, ka tū hei kaupapa e aro whānui ana ki te ahurea o Raukawa, ki ōna kōrero taketake, ki ōna kōrero ūkaipō.

I tēnei tau, i runga i mahi whakarite a Richard Heke, a Tūroa Tepana, me te tīma whānui o Kakara Whakarei, i hoki anō te whare kōrero ki te aroaro o Pakaketaiari, ki ngā hapū e whitu o Te Pae o Raukawa. I whai wāhi atu ngā tauira ki ngā pou o te whare kōrero, ki a Taihako Maui, ki a Paraone Gloyne, ki a Ngāhuia Kopa, ki a Tangiwai Tepana, ki a Tiare Tepana, ki a Kyle Amopiu, rātou ko Mal McKenzie, me ngā kaiwhakahaere o te hōtaka tamariki, a Kamaea Hakaraia rāua ko Kauri Tepana. He nui ngā kaupapa i horahia ki te pātaka kōrero hei wānanga mā te iwi, ko aua mahi anō ērā, he ako kīwaha, he wetewete kōrero tuku iho, he ruku ki te rētōtanga o ngā tikanga o te kāinga, ko te otinga iho, ko tā ngā tauira he orooro i te toki whakaaro, i te toki kōrero, kia pai ai te mau ki te wao nui o te ao.

I ia tau ka whakaritea he haerenga kia rangonatia ai, kia kitea ai, kia takahia ai ngā wāhi e kōrerotia ana, e wānangahia ana e tātou. I te tau nei i tau ngā waewae ki te take o Tītiraupenga, ki te whanga hoki o Whangamata (Kinloch). I rere ko ngā kōrero me ngā waiata e hāngai ana ki ngā wāhi nei, me ō rātou pānga

ki a Raukawa me ōna uri. Ko te manako nui, ka tutungi ai te ahi ki roto i ngā tauira, kia whitawhita ai, kia muramura ai, kia rangona hoki tōna hau, kia kore rawa e mātao, e piroku, e kewa. Hei te tau e heke mai nei whakaarangia ake anō ai ngā pou pou o te whare, engari, hei roto i ngā tini kaupapa o te wā, toutou anō ai i te ahi o reo kia tika, o reo kia rere, o reo kia Māori, o reo kia kounga.

Scan the QR code to watch a behind-the-scenes video showcasing the mahi that brings our Whare Kōrero to life



Scan the code or visit  
[bit.ly/wharekorero2025](https://bit.ly/wharekorero2025)



PAKAKE TAIARI

Te Whare Kōrero o Raukawa ki Mōkai (Pakaketaiari) Marae







# Vanessa Eparaima

## *Appointment to the Waitangi Tribunal*



Hārewa te tōtōaireka o te wao, ka tiripoua ko ngā take o te wā ki te whenua hei oranga mō te iwi Māori katoa.

Raukawa extends its congratulations and pride that former Raukawa Settlement Trust chair, Vanessa Eparaima has been appointed to the Waitangi Tribunal.

This recognition is a personal achievement for Vanessa, and a testament to her commitment to Māori and iwi development, governance excellence, and advocacy for both community and iwi wellbeing. As a member of the Tribunal, Vanessa's considerable skills and experience will contribute to the continued progress of the Treaty-based Crown-Māori relationship.

Vanessa Eparaima (Raukawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa) hails from Mōkai Marae, Te Pae o Raukawa. Vanessa brings a wealth of experience to her new role, as a seasoned director, she holds leadership positions across both commercial and non-profit sectors, including serving as the Chair of Te Mana Whakahaere, the governing body of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. As a director of Raukawa Iwi Development Ltd, Vanessa has played a guiding role in driving our steady financial growth, helping expand our iwi asset base from \$50m in 2012 to approximately \$260m today.

Her extensive governance experience, particularly in Māori development and iwi advocacy, positions her as an ideal appointee to the Waitangi Tribunal. Vanessa's career also included more than a decade as the Chair of the Raukawa Settlement Trust and Raukawa Charitable Trust, where she played a pivotal role in Treaty negotiations for Raukawa, successfully securing our comprehensive Treaty settlement. More recently, Vanessa has also played a key role in the long journey to have the historic Ō-Rākau Pā returned back to iwi ownership.

Vanessa's appointment follows years of dedication to the advancement of Māori interests across a range of kaupapa. In 2014, she was made a Member of the

New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) in recognition of her services to Māori. She is widely respected for her leadership in Māori development, particularly in empowering iwi communities to flourish. Additionally, Vanessa is a staunch advocate for the empowerment of wāhine and environmental stewardship, making her a well-rounded and compassionate leader. She is also Te Wananga o Aotearoa Chair, and a member of the Tūaropaki board, where she is also chair of the Tūaropaki Power Station.

The Waitangi Tribunal, which has been instrumental in hearing and reporting on Treaty claims for over 40 years, plays a crucial role in the reconciliation of the many outstanding issues between Māori and the Crown. With the Tribunal approaching its 50th anniversary, it is hoped that the appointment of new members, including Vanessa, will ensure the Tribunal remains steadfast in upholding its important mahi.

In terms of her recent appointment, Vanessa says she is humbled to be asked to join the Tribunal, joining a prestigious current and previous membership.

*"I am incredibly humbled, but excited to be asked to take up this role. The Tribunal has a very important role to play and I look forward to contributing to the journey of the Tribunal in whatever way I am asked to contribute."*

*"I want to acknowledge the incredibly diverse and satisfying experience I was allowed to learn and take on while I was Chair of Raukawa, which has played no small part in preparing me for the mahi of the Tribunal. I remain eternally grateful to Raukawa for being allowed the opportunity to serve."*



# Louis Armstrong

*From the Navy, Back Home to Ngātira*



Louis Armstrong reminisces about his childhood, spending lots of his time at Ngātira Marae, Whakaaratamaiti Marae and others in the Raukawa tākiwa. He was always outside playing with his cousins and running amuck, we were *"marae country bumpkin kids"*, he says. He'll never forget the Ngāti Hinerangi marae on Douglas Road that had a species machine, and Pikitū Marae that had a pool table.

But Louis's fondest memories are at Ngātira Marae, recalling the abundance of kaumātua. The paepae was always full, it felt like three to four rows deep. Kaumātua whose wisdom shaped his youth, especially, Kaunihera Kaumātua Chair, Koro Hori, who was a big influence on him and took him under his wing, which was a great privilege.

The newly appointed Ngātira Marae Trustee said being a trustee means more than just occupying a seat. It's a commitment to his people, ensuring they receive the support they deserve.

His vision for the iwi is bold, create a whakapapa book, a blueprint book, similar to Ngāi Tahu, where descendants who want to connect to the tribe, simply state their ancestor's name. If the name is connected to one of the tupuna in the book, then they can register with the iwi as well as getting access to any information that Ngāi Tahu hold regarding their ancestors.

*"This is something I feel that we need and who better to maintain the mana and tapu of our whakapapa so that it is not lost or diminished to deceit and greed."*

Louis grew up in Pinedale near Putāruru, going to Kōhanga Reo, and then St Mary's Catholics School, before the whānau moved to Tokoroa when he was eight years old.

He has two brothers and two sisters, attended St Mary's, Central School, East School, Tokoroa Intermediate and Tokoroa High School, before moving to Hamilton as a teenager and then signed up for the Royal New Zealand Navy as a 20-year-old.

He spent around 16 years with the Navy, based in Tāmaki Makaurau with his wife and two sons. He travelled around the world, Asia, Dubai, Qatar, before being stationed at the Navy Base in Auckland. Life was good, and the whānau were doing well. But as the years progressed, home was beckoning, with friends and whānau trying to pull them back to Raukawa.

In 2012, Louis began working at Raukawa Charitable Trust and he became hungry for more knowledge and growth within Te Reo Māori.

His Te Reo Māori journey is supported by friends and whānau, Charlie and Tangiwai Tepana, Paraone Glyone, and many other mentors. Telling him to return home and reconnect has seen Louis further his language journey with various qualifications, the most recent are Te Panekiretanga o te Reo Māori (The Institute of Excellence in Te Reo Māori, 2014) and Te Tohu Paerua o te Reo Kairangi (Master of Māori Language Excellence, 2023).

*"I realised we became rich in different ways being home. Rich in my sons attending wharekura, rich in language, whānau and culture."*

He also loves personal development courses, always learning and growing through wānanga and education. He enjoys working out at one of the Tokoroa local gyms, Gym 56. He is inspired by the older men that train at the gym, calling them *"tough as nails"*.

*"There's no excuses and I find that really inspiring. We have times where we train and then sit down and kōrero about our lives. I enjoy the conversations."*

# The Return of Ō-Rākau

## *Te Pire mō Ō-Rākau, Te Pae o Maumahara Ō-Rākau Remembrance Bill Passes*

On Tuesday, February 18, 2025, Te Pire mō Ō-Rākau, Te Pae o Maumahara/Ō-Rākau Remembrance Bill passed its second and third readings. The passing of this bill represented a deeply significant act of remembrance and restoration for the people of Ngā Ahi e Toru (Raukawa, Maniapoto and Waikato-Tainui), whose tūpuna bravely stood at Ō-Rākau 160 years ago.

The Battle of Ō-Rākau, fought from 31 March to 2 April 1864, was one of the defining moments of Aotearoa history. Around 300 Māori, including women and children, defended their land against a force of British soldiers. They battled over three days tragically, with many lives lost. This battle marked the last major conflict in the Crown's invasion of Waikato, a campaign that led to the confiscation of over 1.2 million acres of land.

For generations, the descendants of those who fought at Ō-Rākau have carried the weight of this history. The significance of the site has long been acknowledged by iwi, and the journey to formal recognition gained momentum in 2015 when the Crown purchased 9.7 hectares of land at the battle site, five kilometres west of Kihikihi. The return of this whenua was a momentous step, but it was only the beginning.

In April 2024, representatives of Ngā Ahi e Toru travelled to Wellington to witness the first reading of the Ō-Rākau Remembrance Bill. That occasion was filled with emotion as whānau reflected on the courage of their tūpuna.

In July 2024, Ngā Ahi e Toru hosted the Māori Affairs Select Committee at Parawera Marae regarding submissions to support or oppose the Bill. Whānau and descendants of those who fought at Ō-Rākau had the opportunity to share their kōrero, memories, and aspirations for the future of the whenua. The event was more than just a formal submission process; it was a symbolic gathering that brought together different iwi and whānau from interested parties.

Nearly a year later since the first reading, we gathered once more in Parliament to witness the bill's final passage, an act that ensures the memory of Ō-Rākau will never fade.

By passing this bill, Parliament not only returns the land but also acknowledging the immense loss suffered by whānau, hapū, and iwi due to the battle and the subsequent confiscations of land.

As the public gallery stood up in waiata and haka at the passing of the bill, we are reminded of the work that will continue to capture the narratives of those connected to Ō-Rākau, ensuring that future generations understand the significance of what took place.



Raukawa uri at Hongoeka Marae, Porirua







# Te Koha a Raukawa

## New Tokoroa Housing Development



Former Tokoroa East School Site

Raukawa Iwi Development Limited (RIDL) is set to begin work on a new 56 house development on Main Rd, Tokoroa.

On Monday 24 February, Raukawa trustees and developers gathered to break ground as the development takes shape. The turning of sod and karakia was led by trustee Louis Armstrong and kaumātua Te Hapuku Rikiriki.

The development, on the former Tokoroa East School site, 400 metres from the Tokoroa town centre, will provide new residential and two commercial lots as part of mixed community housing development.

Raukawa chair Kataraina Hodge said the project is one of the most significant residential developments in Tokoroa for more than 40 years.

*"We are grateful to be providing new home solutions for our people and many others across the South Waikato community in this exciting new development. We have worked very hard to ensure there are a range of options for those at different stages of their home ownership or rental journey."*

RIDL will create housing opportunities for Raukawa whānau and will build 40 new homes targeting whānau seeking homeownership and high quality affordable rental properties.

There will be 16 sections available for purchase, either as bare land or as a house and land package, from mid 2025 onward. All homes built across the development will involve a mix of three and four bedroom free standing homes.

The Tokoroa East School site was purchased by RIDL in 2019, with the company working through a prolonged design and consenting process to get the development to launch.

RIDL chair Henry van der Heyden said while there had been frustrations at the delays and processes required to get the project up and running, it was satisfying to now be able to begin development.

*"It has been instructive in terms of the commitment in time and resources required to get a new housing development underway."*

*"We are almost at the finish-line, and we are very excited to now be able to offer new homes to our Raukawa whānau and to those in the market to own or rent a new home."*

*"The development will focus on high quality housing and a neighbourhood that will be distinctively Raukawa, with special attention placed on landscape elements and features."*

Housing will feature a range of sustainability features including low impact exteriors, low flow piping and tapware, hotwater heat pumps, Panasonic integrated homesolution, thermally broken double glazing, sustainable hardflooring and 100% NZ wool carpets.

Civil construction works will begin in March 2025 and the first homes will be due for delivery Q1 2026, with full completion Q2 2027.

Keep an eye on our social media and website for upcoming details on how to engage with this housing opportunity, including support from Ka Uruora who is partnered with our project.

Ka Uruora offers savings, education and home ownership opportunities to help you towards achieving financial independence for you and your whānau.



*new homes in total*



*homes specifically targeted to support whānau seeking homeownership and high quality affordable rental properties*



*homes available for purchase (bare land or house / land package)*



# Mōtai Tangata Rau

## *Beyond the Stage and Competition*

Mōtai is not a kapa haka, Mōtai is a wānanga. This distinction, articulated by Paraone Gloyne, definitively outlines the purpose of the rōpū beyond the competitive stage.

While many kapa haka in February set their sights on Te Matatini, the grandest stage for the artform, the primary purpose of Mōtai Tangata Rau is not to take home the coveted, Ngāpō Pimia Wehi Duncan McCintyre Trophy. Instead, it is to bring our uri together, awaken their ancestral knowledge, teach them our kōrero and disseminate it to the world. The recent performance at Te Matatini was a culmination of those core principles.

Mōtai Tangata Rau is a place where we come together to challenge our understanding, refine our beliefs, and test our knowledge in pursuit of greater māramatanga and has embedded itself in the heart of Raukawa, nurturing not only kapa haka but also the growth of te reo, tikanga, and iwi leadership. The landscape of our iwi 20 years ago, before its inception, was markedly different from today. Since the establishment of our kapa, there has been an undeniable surge in reo speakers, tikanga exponents, and cultural leaders, many of whom have emerged from within its ranks. The true depth of Mōtai, however, is found not just in those who stand on stage, but in those who labour in the unseen spaces.

Te Kirikōwhai Tianne Hamiora, a formidable performer in her own right, did not take her own poi on stage this year. Instead, she wove her presence into every poi piu and poi atua she crafted; through hours of research, harvesting, extracting, trial and error, until each piece was perfected. She was one of many in the kākahu team whose tireless mahi brought the image of our kōrero to life, their vision of our tūpuna so vividly realised that it earned the trophy for Best Kākahu; an honour that speaks to the countless hours, skill, and

dedication poured into every stitch, every weave, and every detail.

Beyond the creative hands are the logistical minds and tireless hearts that sustain the kaupapa. The kai teams, our “*cookie monsters*” who rise before dawn to ensure we are well-fed and fuelled for the physical demands of practice. The team leads who spend hours on calls, attending hui, and working tirelessly to secure accommodation and funding so that our journey to New Plymouth was as affordable as possible. The composers and arrangers who are also kaihaka, sacrificing precious hours of rest to craft lyrics, harmonies, and actions, often going without sleep to bring the vision to life.

And then, there is te wāhi ngaro, guiding us in all that we do. Whakapono and māramatanga walk hand in hand with Mōtai. One fuels us, the other grounds us. We believe in what we do because we understand the greater kaupapa. We sing with conviction because we have walked the lands we honour in our waiata. This connection, this wairua, elevates our kapa beyond performance and into something sacred.

Mōtai is not just about the stage; it is about our people, our learning, and our legacy. And in this wānanga, every hand, every voice, and every sacrifice carries the weight of our tūpuna and the promise of our future for our mokopuna.

### **Nā Teanonui McKenzie**

Scan the QR code to watch Mōtai Tangata Rau's performance at Te Matatini



Scan the code or visit  
[bit.ly/motai2025](https://bit.ly/motai2025)







Education Grant Recipient, Minor - Major Stratford Nicholls

# Raukawa Grants and Key Dates

## Education Grants

Depending on your studies, registered iwi members are able to apply for up to \$2000 in education related support.

Study Type	Period that this grant covers	Applications Open	Applications Close	Applications considered
Short course* Certificate, Diploma	01 Jan 2025 – 30 Jun 2025	01 Jan 2025	30 Jun 2025	Jul 2025
Bachelors and Masters	2026 Academic year	30 Nov 2025	31 Jan 2026	Feb 2026
Doctoral	2026 Academic year	30 Nov 2025	31 Jan 2026	Feb 2026

\* Short courses include Te Kura Reo o Raukawa and Te Uru Raukawa programmes offered by Raukawa

## Sports Grants

Registered iwi members can apply for a contribution towards costs incurred while competing as an amateur sportsperson at a local, regional or national representative level. It is open to amateur competitors such as athletes, coaches, managers and officials (umpire, referee, judge).

Type	Period that this grant covers	Applications Open	Applications Close	Applications considered
Sports grants round 1	01 Jun 2025 – 30 Nov 2025	01 Jun 2025	30 Nov 2025	Jan 2026
Sports grants round 2	01 Dec 2024 – 31 May 2025	01 Dec 2024	31 May 2025	Jun 2025

## Kuia and Koroua Wellbeing Grants

Registered kaumātua can apply for a contribution towards costs incurred or needing assistance with their wellbeing.

We have streamlined the process to make this service more accessible for our kaumātua. There is no longer a need to hold your receipts for this grant.

Type	Period that this grant covers	Applications Open	Applications Close	Applications considered
Kuia and Koroua Wellbeing grants	01 Jun 2024 – 31 May 2025	01 Jun 2024	31 May 2025	Jun 2025

### Want to Register with Raukawa or Need Help?

To register as a member of Raukawa follow the link below. If you have any questions about our grants process call 0800 RAUKAWA and ask for our grants team.

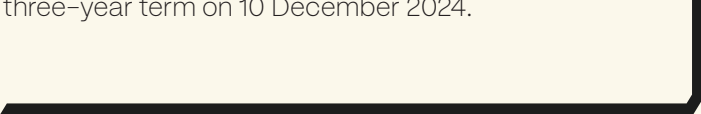


Scan the code or visit [rauakawa.info/grants](https://rauakawa.info/grants)

# Governance Pānui

## Trustee Nomination Results Announcement

We are pleased to announce the successful nominee for our marae representative position. Congratulations to Deb Davies from Pikitū Marae, who began her three-year term on 10 December 2024.



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