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| Speak Up – Kōrerotia  Māori placenames  19 July 2023 | |
| Female | Coming up next: Conversations on human rights with “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”, here on Plains FM. |
| Sally | E ngā mana,  E ngā reo,  E ngā hau e whā  Tēnā koutou katoa  Nau mai ki tēnei hōtaka: “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”.    Tune in as our guests “Speak Up”, sharing their unique and powerful experiences and opinions and may you also be inspired to “Speak Up” when the moment is right.  Ko Sally Carlton tēnei, me te hōtaka reo irirangi: “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. Te kaupapa o te rā: we’re speaking today about Māori placenames. I’m really, really excited about this topic, it’s something I’ve been interested in for a long time and I’m thrilled that we’re finally going to be bringing it to air. It’s something that I think is becoming more and more topical, I think we’re seeing more and more of it, and I think this is a really good time in July 2023 to be talking about this. There have been a couple of quite recent developments in this space as well.  We’re all familiar with Māori placenames. ‘Aotearoa’ is one that we are no doubt all familiar with – Ao-tea-roa, the land of the long white cloud – but there are so many of them that we probably don’t even realise part of the time that these are Māori placenames. Today we’re going to be thinking about what are some of these placenames but also their meanings and why it is so important that we recognise and restore and acknowledge these names as well.  We’ve got two fantastic guests with us today who I’m really excited to be meeting and introducing to you all. We’ve got Ruihana Smith from Ngāti Kuia and Wendy Shaw who is from Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, the New Zealand Geographic Board and you will no doubt explain a lot more about what it is that you do and who you are. Ruihana, perhaps we can start with you. It’d be great to hear about who you are, the kaupapa that drives you and what you’re going to be contributing to today’s kōrero. |
| Ruihana | Kia ora. Yeah firstly, ko wai ahau? [mihimihi] So I am Ruihana, I am a descendent of Ngāti Kuia, I work for Te Rūnunga o Ngāti Kuia Trust as the Kaiwhakahaere Team Lead for our Wairau-based team which is focused a lot around environmental mahi. So essentially I’m a representative of Ngāti Kuia in the environmental space and as you can imagine, that covers quite a few things. So it certainly keeps me busy. |
| Sally | I bet and I’m super excited to have you on this show today, I met you a couple of months ago at a hīkoi going up Maungatapu to see the pakohe and the special kind of stone that can only be found on that particular maunga and the kōrero that you shared with us then was so fantastic, so I’m really excited about today. |
| Ruihana | Kia ora. |
| Sally | And Wendy. |
| Wendy | Yeah kia ora, kia ora koutou ko Wendy Shaw ahau. He Hēkeretari/Secretary mō Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa. So I am Wendy Shaw, secretary for the New Zealand Geographic Board. I’ve been in this role for quite some time, actually I think a quarter of a century, and it has evolved. The Board members obviously have changed as well, we’ve got a ten-member board, it’s a statutory board, and their kaupapa, their purpose, function, duty, is to look after placenames in Aotearoa New Zealand and in particular, official placenames. But of course we have some quite specific functions in our guiding legislation around Māori placenames and as you’ve said there have been a few changes happening in the past few years and so it's good to reflect on some of those and why they’re happening and what the move or the push forward is for the protection I guess, and the restoration of Māori placenames, kia ora. |
| Sally | Fantastic, thank you so much. So I’m glad to hear that you feel we are also seeing some developments because I certainly feel like we are. It would be great if we start off our chat today thinking about what are some of these recent developments we’ve been seeing in this space? |
| Wendy | Who would you like to start? |
| Sally | Whoever. |
| Wendy | I’ll go first in that case. |
| Sally | Okay. |
| Wendy | I guess yeah there’s definitely been a groundswell of change and that’s been helped along by some government-led strategies and privately-led strategies as well. So I hark back to Vodafone’s campaign, maybe five or more years ago, where it was “Say it tika”, so say it correctly. And as a result of that, they approached the Board regarding a number of more commonly used Māori names around the motu and what we realised is that we had quite a few of those names didn’t have correct orthography in terms of macrons and hyphens and capitalisation and all of that. So we started a process of introducing macrons to some of those Māori placenames, so that was one of the drivers.  Wikipedia externally has also changed its policy maybe two or three years ago, where they would only write placenames that had… in a form with spelling that was commonly used by the community. So that meant a lot of Māori placenames didn’t have the correct orthography, especially with macrons. So we managed to work with Wikipedia and the New Zealand chapter of Wikipedia managed to campaign with their head office and so you will find every New Zealand based placename in Wikipedia has a link back to the Gazetteer, which is the Board’s list of placenames, so that’s Māori and non-Māori placenames. But it also now includes macrons, so that’s another thing.  Media reporting is another area where TV, radio are using pronunciation correctly, they are saying the Māori words for major towns and cities and it’s becoming more normalised in the reporting that’s happening and so people are getting used to those names. Waka Kotahi bilingual signage is something that’s out there at the moment and they’ve been consulting, they’ve rolled out or decided on school/kura and for the rest of the traffic signs they’re looking to… well they have consulted with the public of New Zealand and now they’ll decide what they want to do. But that also includes destination signs, road signs that include placenames.  So I can talk a little bit more about that later and then we’ve got some government strategies, very specific to the revitalisation of the Māori language. So we have Maihi Karauna and Maihi Māori, so Maihi Māori is managed by the new Te Mātāwai, Maihi Karauna has what they call some audacious goals around what public servants should be able to say and use in terms of the Māori language and protocols by 2030, I think it is.  We also have Reo Rua which is a DIA (Department of Internal Affairs) strategy around helping communities from a local government perspective to revitalise the language and then I must also remember to mention Te Arawhiti’s engagement guidelines. I could go on if you wish, there’s lots of influences. I guess what I would like to say also is that the public… there’s the groundswell of change has also come from the public, that expectation to hear Māori words, kupu and placenames pronounced correctly and spelled correctly and I guess one other thing is in the new histories curriculum the Ministry of Education rolled out this year, 2023: Māori placenames are an important part of that histories curriculum. |
| Sally | That’s a fantastic list to get us going. Ruihana, anything you’d like to add to that? |
| Ruihana | Yeah absolutely, I think when we talk about significant developments in this space recently, obviously that’s a space where I you know, advocate for in regards to using our reo now but I think we have to look at… go back in time a bit and look at, you know, for us it’s about acknowledging our tīpuna, our kaumātua, who all went through and put in the hard yards to push us to the point where we are now, where I sit on behalf of Ngāti Kuia. You know for instance, my nana Smith, she was physically punished for using her reo in her, you know, just down the road from her pā where she went to school and coming forward with our cultural redress and part of our Treaty settlement having names reinstated.  An example of this is what… people had called the Pelorus River is now dual-named with Te Hoiere coming first, Te Hoiere/Pelorus River. So that… the work for that was done by people before, right, and now we start to see a bit of a snowball effect of mahi being undertaken now but it’s about… we’re sitting here now but there were ones before who did that mahi and now we’re looking at, you know, bilingual road signs.  You know, I’ve seen quite a bit about that in the media recently which is awesome because for me and a lot of our whānau, you know, our generations and above have had to go… because of what had happened to the likes of our kaumātua, gone back and learn our reo but our children, like my children for example go to kura at their marae, at Ōmaka Marae and so te reo for them is actually at the forefront.  So the world that they’re living in, you know, reo was there for them and for it to be out there everywhere, that’s just what the future looks like to us, to me, yeah. |
| Sally | And one thing I think we should mention – unfortunately I couldn’t find somebody from Kā Huru Manu to take part because that would have been great – but Ngāi Tahu has just created what they’ve labelled a cultural mapping project, where they’ve done presumably a massive piece of work to put together this cultural map of the Ngāi Tahu rohe. So unfortunately we haven’t got a representative here today but I think we should acknowledge that piece of work.  And also – I’m sure you’re going to tell us more about it, Wendy – but the work that the Geographic Board has been doing recently, also in terms of releasing maps. Now I found this out… new Māori placenames maps, the first time they’ve been updated since 1995. If you could explain a wee bit about that, that would be great. |
| Wendy | Sure. So actually the work started, as you say Ruihana, with people before. So for these maps, they… There was a centennial atlas that was commissioned or was being prepared in the 1930s and it didn’t go ahead because of the war effort and the lack of funding but a lot of work had gone into preparing this map, including research from Sir Āpirana Ngata, people like Sir Johannes Carl Anderson, a number of scholars of the time. That body of work was parked and then in the early 1990s we had an international group that got together and they… and it was sort of like the year or Decade of Indigenous Languages and so the department at the time, the Department of Survey and Land Information, decided it was time to produce a map of original Māori placenames around 1840. So that was done in 1995, Te Ika-a-Māui, Te Wai Pounamu, and it’s taken us all this long, nearly 30 years, to update that map with a further 300 names on each of the maps Te Ika-a-Māui, Te Wai Pounamu.  Where we sourced the additional names from was direct consultation with iwi groups but also our engagement through Te Arawhiti and the Treaty settlements. So a lot of the final Treaty settlement names are on the maps as well. The 1995 maps were in fact researched by Te Aue Davis, the late Te Aue Davis from Maniapoto, she went around the country, the motu meeting with kaumātua to sort of confirm the spelling, confirm the story that went with the names, and so what we’ve done is we’ve built on that original body of work with additional names.  Those that we could fit on that 1:1 million scale. The 1995 maps had artwork prepared by the late Cliff Whiting, we’ve kind of modernised that and used an outfit in Christchurch called Ariki Creative. So they’ve used stylised Māori symbology, there’s still one taniwha there, there’s the fishhook of Māui, there’s the shape of the eagle ray for the North Island Te Ika-a-Māui and down south we’ve got titi and we’ve got the whale and we’ve got the twin sails of the waka that brough the migration through to Aotearoa New Zealand.  So really very proud of the maps that we’ve just printed in June, they’ve been distributed to 2,500 schools. This week they are being distributed, a set, to every iwi organisation and marae throughout the country and then we’ll also send them out to government agencies and councils so that they are used. They are not necessarily the names that are used in the modern context and what we have on the back of the maps is a small kōrero and the kōrero and the link to the current name, so you can again hyperlink back to the Gazetteer and get a fuller story.  And they may not be names that people think well now that they’re on this map will they be restored into the modern context. Maybe they will, maybe they won’t, but the point of the exercise was to collect these original Māori names so that they are preserved in a written form on an official maps beyond oral traditions, which won’t fade but not everybody has access to those ancestral stories. And so this is a way of getting that information out to all New Zealanders and all schools and we will… The maps are online if you go to the LINZ website. It’s [www.linz.govt.nz](http://www.linz.govt.nz) and then if you just search for tangata whenua, two words, you’ll be able to find the landing page for the maps and from there you can download digital versions of both the fronts and the backs.  But of course you can purchase the maps as well in the printed form. So that’s probably about… I mean, I could go on a bit more but we did launch at parliament and our minister launched… unveiled the maps for us so it was a nice occasion and like you say, Ruihana, they are such important names, they are a taonga for all of New Zealand to make sure we preserve and don’t lose through time. |
| Sally | I think it’s probably time for our first waiata. Ruihana, you selected a Ngāti Kuia waiata for us. |
| Ruihana | We’re talking about placenames and the naming of this, the whenua as a whole and Aotearoa. This waiata is about Ngāti Kuia tīpuna Kupe, so Kupe and his wife in our whakapapa, Hine-te-aparangi who saw the clouds above the land mass. And Kupe and Kaikaiawaro are associated with many placenames to the top of the South Island. |
| Sally | Yeah super cool, it’s such a great song to match the kaupapa, excellent. |
|  | **WAIATA – KA TIRO NOA** |
| Sally | This is Speak Up – Kōrerotia and today we’re talking about Māori placenames. I thought it might be nice to think about why is it so important that we know where somewhere is called – not necessarily in Māori or in English – but why is it important that we label or give a name to places. |
| Ruihana | So for us we talk about the process of naming which is something we call taunahanaha whenua, so that’s the whole protocol and process of naming places. Really significant and it has a whole lot of different reasonings behind it. So we have the likes of, I think a big part of it is essentially embedding our whakapapa into the landscape. So you know, talking about our ancestors when they first arrived and remembering them and also remembering our connection to them and thus the whenua of which the names are embedded. That’s a really big part of taunahanaha whenua, it’s sort of a rights to land for want of a better term through our whakapapa and connection to them.  But there’s also like really practical reasons for the naming of places as well. So you know, a lot of places are named after resources. So we have a place in Tōtaranui called Anakakata which is the place where kākā was speared, you know, for instance. So talking about things that were done in places, what places were used for. It’s also another one which is tied in with whakapapa is actually sometimes like geographical descriptions of places. So we go back to the kōrero of Māui – and there’s a lot to be unpacked from the kōrero puraka where Māui fishes up Te Ika-a-nui, there’s heaps to be unpacked – but one thing to be unpacked from that is the geographical description of the shape of the country you know, the battered stingray of the North Island and the waka and even the punga, the anchor of the waka. And for us, Te Tau Ihi o te Waka-a-Māui, the prow of Māui’s waka – it’s all describing the actual whenua itself, right.  So there’s a whole lot to be unpacked from naming places and it’s always quite poetic as well. So there’s all these significant reasons and I think that’s why it’s really important that we use these names because they’re not just names that have been plonked for no reason, there’s been a lot of thought, reasoning and especially whakapapa that’s gone into these places that can tell us a lot about them, connect us to them and just all the history that’s packed within them. |
| Wendy | Kia ora Ruihana. I think for Māori, placenames are part of as you said, your ancestral heritage and oral traditions. Where you’re from in your pepeha tells that story so other people can know about your people and your territory. It’s your tūrangawaewae, your place to stand, and that’s communicated really beautifully through pepeha. The marking of a placename is like a pou in the landscape and in that regard, the {Geographic] Board’s Māori name metaphorically means Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, the memorial markers of the landscape.  So as a pou, the names will commemorate events and rituals and battles and discovery and coming from home from Pacific, mythology, conquest, boundaries, there’s the resources descriptions as you’ve said, so they provide a descriptive tally so that people can route-find and of course they commemorate people, the ancestors and tīpuna that went before. So in some ways those placenames of the past were an oral roadmap for pre-European Māori and the most important thing that they really conveyed was the story that went with them.  So you talked about the spearing of the kākā, so that was an example of perhaps an area where the place was rich in a food resource and I think the story also is important in terms of who, which iwi gave the name. Who was the ancestor, what happened there and what can I find there in terms of those resources.  So coupled with the cultural aspect, though, is that need for physical, practical location identification. So when we are communicating to others about that place over there or I’m going to Tāmaki Makaurau, I’m going to Ōtautahi, you know in your mind that’s in Te Wai Pounamu, you know in your mind it’s at the top of Te Ika-a-Māui and therefore you can navigate to that named place which has a position, if you like.  So sometimes I say that that cultural heritage aspect and the need for practical location identification, sometimes they’re at odds with each other, especially for the Board because many Māori placenames tell a story in the placename itself and they become a very long placename and from a mapping addressing government sort of administration perspective, those long placenames can be challenging. It’s not to say that we don’t have long Māori placenames but that’s the dilemma, I suppose, we face as a statutory Board in terms of determining what the placenames are.  So I think, as I said, they’re important markers and they help us navigate and I think also coupled with that practical and cultural is that spiritual connection that everybody has in terms of triggering your own personal and social connections and experiences and sense of place, identity, belonging and I think with Māori placenames, I think it bears out more actively in a spiritual sense and ancestral sense and a traditional sense, than it does for non-Māori placenames. But I also would think there is an aspect of that in the overlayed introduced European placenames that come… have come to this country as well. |
| Sally | One thing that did cross my mind as well is – and we’ve sort of touched on it – but that element of mātauranga and the knowledge that is embedded in placenames. And I wondered about if either of you have examples of placenames that convey within them knowledge of weather or we’ve talked about food sources but also I was thinking like for example with climate change and the need for managed retreat potentially, these sorts of ideas. Do you know any placenames that have those sorts of weather, or warnings almost, built into them? |
| Ruihana | Yeah so one that springs to top of mind is we have an old pā site located within the vicinity of Te Hoiere/Pelorus River which was called Tai Toku [*inaudible*] Pā and ‘tai toku’ refers to the gift of the tide but it’s essentially talking about the tidal influence. This is a really… It’s essentially a flood plain area but really you know, it’s talking about… Because these days most people wouldn’t think about that area being tidal influenced, they think oh it’s way further up river but in recent weather events when the water has come up, we’ve seen the water flowing back upstream from the tidal influence. So there’s a bit of mātauranga within that, within that placename just for instance.  Go a bit wider with it as well, I spoke about Kupe and our waiata that refers to our ancestor Kupe and what… When we talk about taunahanaha whenua and oral traditions, these were the vessels to carry mātauranga essentially when we weren’t… we didn’t have a written language, we didn’t write any things down, we were remembering them in other ways. So that’s through waiata, it’s through pūrākau and it’s through taunahanaha whenua, all of these things, so the naming of places are sort of like a vessel that carries knowledge through the generations, right.  And so, as I mentioned, in the Top of the South Island and in the Cook Strait region, there are more places named after Kupe than anywhere else in Aotearoa and all of these places remember Kupe and his feats but they also describe the actual appearance of landmarks, right. So we remember the kōrero as passed down the pūrākau of Kupe travelling to Aotearoa slaying Te Wheke in his waka, travelling in you know, the ‘Shoulder of Kupe’, the ‘Treasure of Kupe’, the ‘Footprints of Kupe’ – there are so many places and we remember the story and we recount where he went and it’s used essentially an oral map that the people following in the footprints of Kupe essentially. So I’m just using that as an example of Kupe and mātauranga and how mātauranga sort of is carried within many things but placenames specifically. |
| Wendy | Yes thanks Ruihana, I… Just to add to that Kupe kōrero, you know, we’ve got the placenames of his pursuing of Te Whekenui and you know, we’ve got, starting up in the Wairarapa, Rangiwhakaoma, Matira/Castle Rock and then Te Whekenui escaped and there was that final confrontation at Arapaoa Island and now Te Whekenui Bay, the blood ran in the waters, Tory Channel/Kura Te Au, the eyeballs were cast into the sea. Here, at The Brothers Ngā Whatukaiponu and where Kupe cooked Te Whekenui, Umuwheke Bay. So that was the earth oven. So, like you say, it’s an oral map of the events that happened for Kupe and there are other examples I can perhaps share later on but in terms of mātauranga Māori and the environment, it’s threaded throughout the placenames, the Māori placenames, that we have in Aotearoa New Zealand. We have about 23,000 Māori placenames in the Gazetteer. There’s about the same number of non-Māori placenames in the Gazetteer as well.  I would perhaps draw attention to a couple of examples from my memory. One is some of the Maniapoto names that have recently been covered in a virtual fieldtrip by Core Education New Zealand. So that was one of our Board members, Shane Te Ruki talking about Kahupeka and the central plateau volcanoes and the story of female and male maunga and actually you know, spreading out because there weren’t enough females in the Central Plateau for the male maunga. This is their tradition and so that you know, I suppose volcanic movement of the earth to create other maunga in other areas of Aotearoa New Zealand and yeah, so Pirongia [Mountain], I think we’ve got… even Waipā River is part of the kōrero. So there’s a huge connection between natural events and the oral traditions that were brought down so that they weren’t forgotten and to help understand how the land was formed.  And another example is Tarawera. So the eruption in 1886 but prior to that the maunga was more or less still a maunga but Māori had named it Tarawera, meaning the cracks in the top of the maunga. So you know, they understood that it was volcanic and the potential to erupt. You just have to look at the numerous generic Māori terms like puke and manga and maunga and awa and roto and motu and you immediately get a picture of the landscape from the generic terms that are used in Māori placenames. I could say more but… |
| Sally | Thanks Wendy, I think we’re running out of time already. You chose Six60’s ‘Pepeha’ which is a personal favourite of mine – so good choice! – and also ties in really nicely with what we’ve been talking about, this idea of whakapapa being embedded within the whenua. |
| Wendy | Even though specific Māori placenames aren’t used in the waiata, the sense of importance of whānau and love within a pepeha gives you that sense of identity. And I think that’s what placenames also offer and that’s why in Māori tradition and protocol, when you say your pepeha, you start with the features in the landscape around you and that’s your identity. |
|  | **MUSIC BY SIX60 – PEPEHA** |
| Sally | This is Speak Up – Kōrerotia and today we’re thinking about Māori placenames with Ruihana Smith and Wendy Shaw. As we get into our final section, I really want to think now about why is it so important. We’ve been talking about the value, the meanings that are embedded within all these Māori placenames; why is it so important that we actively seek to restore them and ideally make them kind of visible in the landscape again? |
| Ruihana | Quite an interesting kōrero, you know, it comes up in the media quite a bit and you know, the backlash that you know, we’re talking about restoration of the original placenames. The backlash that you hear in comments, you know social media comments quite often is why are they changing the placenames, you know, we shouldn’t change the placenames, anti-placename changing, but it’s quite hypocritical in the sense that if people were really anti-changing placenames, they would be happy with the restoration of the original placenames and not them being changed in the first place.  So it’s really important. For us, you know we’ve touched on why the placenames are important. What’s happened over time as a part of colonisation, you know, other names get plonked on top of places that were already named and what you find is you know, some of these… I guess my way of describing it would be a lot of the time, European names of places haven’t been as thought-out as our tīpuna were, you know. There’s a big one at the moment with Picton – he wasn’t a particularly nice guy. And a lot of these places were people that hadn’t actually arrived here, so they’re just names that have been plonked on top sometimes.  Although you know, they’ll always have their place in history but I think the important thing for us is restoration of original names. Like its been said, there’s a whole lot of reasoning behind that and I think when you start to look into them, you actually appreciate they’re not just a name. You know, some, like I mentioned before that have been plonked on top, really are just names and there’s probably not a lot deeper than that with some of them. But it’s the mātauranga that’s encapsulated within our placenames and they are the original placenames and they need to be respected. |
| Wendy | Kia ora. The Geographic Board is itself particularly interested in selection, encouragement and restoration of original Māori placenames and this is borne out in some of its statutory functions in its legislation. We uphold standardised orthography for Māori placenames that is set by the orthographic conventions within the Māori Language Commission, Te Taura Whiri i te reo Māori. The Board’s legalisation also has a Treaty clause so that those principles of protection, participation and partnership are really important from the Board’s perspective in terms of bringing the correct names forward.  We want the authentic and authoritative original Māori placenames and to do that we need to speak, engage with the manawhenua, people of the place who have authority over those areas. So that’s a really important step. You know, in New Zealand we’re interested in having a share of Māori placenames, contemporary Māori placenames too in other areas of New Zealand’s territorial jurisdiction. So we have Māori placenames in Antarctica, we have Māori placenames on the sea floor but they’re usually contemporary Māori names. So they have a slightly different set of criteria that go with them but we’re still interested in associated stories and connections from name to place. We don’t want to put a tīpuna on the sea floor.  I would mention the Board’s strategic goals that are specific to Māori placenames. So they include – and they’re not necessarily priorities and we’re not necessarily doing them quickly or now – but restoring original Māori placenames is really important to the Board and that’s often done through Treaty settlements. We want to assign names that reflect New Zealand’s unique culture and heritage, that’s in the legislation. We want to engage with Māori communities to support their names. We want to provide advice and support to Te Taura Whiri on Treaty names and we really want to engage with post-settlement governance entities to meet partnership obligations.  So there are a lot of names that weren’t able to be restored through Treaty settlements because time ran out or money ran out or resources ran out, but that doesn’t mean it stops there. So for the Board it’s really important to engage with that as well. The other thing the Board has committed to doing is its publications are always in English and te reo Māori. Better education is really essential about our original Māori placenames.  You say, Ruihana, that you know, people object and don’t understand don’t accept, but I think from the Board’s perspective at least anyway, our job is to really explain why this is happening, why it is necessary, why it is important and like you say, the history is not necessarily wiped out. Those past names that we might replace are still discoverable and even within Māori, you know, there are layers of names on top of names. So we want to capture that all so that we see the full picture of the naming of a particular place. And I think too for the public of New Zealand who are not Māori, we really want them to embrace the change obviously and then obviously if they have the information and the Board is then able to make those really robust decisions, it will mean that those names are enduring and that they become commonly used, normalised, yeah in everyday use and that’s really what the Board is aiming for in terms of the restoration of Māori placenames.  I can’t emphasise enough that we’ve got specific functions in the Act. We’ve got Board membership who are specifically Māori, we have ten members at the moment and we have five Māori Board members. So it’s really… And then we’ve got this long tradition – nearly 100 years, 2024… 1924 the Board started, so 2024 is our centenary – and we had people like Sir Āpirana Ngata on the board, we had Ta Tipene O’Regan for nearly 30 years, Wharehuia Milroy. A lot of scholars, Māori scholars, who made sure that the right names were restored and correctly.  And thinking about the importance of, you know, the collection and restoration of Māori placenames, I’ve emphasised before the stories that go with them are really critical to the spelling of that name and therefore the meaning of the word, the kupu, that goes with it. Kia ora. |
| Ruihana | Yes I just wanted to touch on… because I talked about, you know, Pākehā names getting placed on top of Māori names but there’s also Māori placenames that have undergone corruptions, for want of a better term. You know, being recorded by early surveyors, written down wrong and thus totally losing their meaning. So one which has been put into the map is a place we call Whakamarino… which has been known as Wakamarina for quite some time. And so for an example, I go out with rangatahi school groups and that sort of thing and we’re on the river and everyone knows that it’s Wakamarina and it sounds Māori and I say you know, what does Wakamarina mean and they all have a think and they go oh waka is a boat, I don’t know, is it somewhere where they parked boats and I’ll say good guess but it means nothing because the name, the ingoa tūturu, is Whakamarino. And ‘whaka’ is to do something, make and ‘marino’ is calm, to make calm and there’s a whole big kōrero attached to that as well.  And there’s a lot of placenames which… |
| Wendy | Oh many, yes many corruptions. We’re trying to fix them as they come to our attention and a more recent one was Rimutaka changed to Remutaka and so that’s a name that was given by Haunui-a-Nanaia in his travels around the west coast of Te Ika-a-Māui and then back around the south coast, up through Remutaka. So it tells a story of him sort of resting down with his cloak and the fringe of his cloaks on the ground.  And the other corruptions like Pōneke for Port Nicholson, that’s not really an original Māori name but Pito-one is (Petone), so we have lots of them and it’s a balance for the Board to decide do we correct the spelling and the orthography or do we hold fast to the long term usage which is wrong but it is what it is and probably this Board is now tending towards changing the spelling in every case because again that’s a statutory function of the Board. |
| Sally | This has been such an excellent kōrero and I’m really sad but we’re running out of time. So just as we finish up in our final couple of minutes, what would you like to say to people if they are a bit nervous or a bit objecting to any changes that are taking place. What would you say to reassure or turn it into a positive experience? |
| Wendy | I would just say it’s all about the story and the kōrero and building our nation’s heritage together. So all of these names belong… They may have originated from Ngāti Kuia, Ngāi Tahu, but we use them in everyday life and they actually belong to all New Zealanders as our shared heritage. |
| Ruihana | Yeah I just want to totally tautoko that. It’s a part of our unique identity, we’re not a European, little European country somewhere in Europe, we’re a Polynesian country with a Polynesian culture and a unique identity associated with that. And like I mentioned before, people are attached to the newer names that have been implemented and they will still be around and it’s just about, you know, remembering the significance and that there’s so much to be unpacked from these names. And at the end of the day you can call it whatever you want when you’re walking past it, you know, that’s what we’ve done forever with the Pākehā names, we still call them our names so you know. I think that’s what I’ll add, yeah kia ora. |
| Sally | Kia ora. Well, tēnā korua, thank you very much both of you for such a really rich discussion and I only wish we had more time to delve into it because we only… I think we scratched the surface, we didn’t get anywhere deep enough but thank you very much anyway. |
| Both | Kia ora. |
|  | **MUSIC BY TAMBURLAINE - WAKAMARINA** |