

Make (Y)our Space

Te Kete Wānanga o Papanui

Story of Whenua

Papanui Library was gifted the name ‘Te Kete Wānanga o Papanui’ which has utilised the rich history of the area and incorporated it into the essence of the library.

‘Te Kete Wānanga’ translates to the ‘baskets of knowledge’ which references the three baskets of knowledge that hold significance to Te Ao Māori and the methods in which Māori learn and interpret information.

Papanui refers to ‘platform in a tree – for a bird snarer’ – Te Aka

The translated term for ‘Papanui’ links in with the history of the area and the traditional use and āhua (nature) of the whenua. With the whenua once being a location that hosted an abundance of resources that were vital to Māori.

The area we know now as Papanui once had a large standing of bush that was considered a prize resource to tangata whenua, its traditional use was that of a ‘mahinga kai’ (food and resource gathering location). This large section of bush housed an abundance of forest resources, that were vital to local Māori and Christchurch.

A few of the different resources and their uses have been listed over the page for inspiration.

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Physical Resources:

As there was a large standing of bush with high quality resources that held a lot of significance to local Māori, here is a list of the key resources and their common uses:

Tōtara

Tōtara is a prized resource with a reddish-brown tinge that has been commonly used in crafting waka, building and for whakairo (carving). It is still a highly prized carving wood today.

Mātai

Mātai was commonly milled, and used significantly for flooring and window sills, it is also commonly used as a carving wood.

Harakeke

Harakeke is one of our most precious resources and is still a prized resource in modern times. This plant was used to make clothes, bags, rope and for medicine. Today it is still used for most of these things.

A few other resources commonly found within the Papanui area were Kahikatea and Kānuka.

Food Resources:

Papanui Bush was more commonly known for its forest resources, below are a few different resources that were found in the area and their common uses.

Tui

They were a prized resources that offered many things to Māori. Such as kai (food), feathers for clothing and not to mention their beautiful singing voices.

Kereru

They were also a very prized resource. These birds were fat and easy to catch because they often got drunk off berries. The fat from these birds was also rendered down and used to preserve food through the seasons.