



For over a century sperm whales were hunted to the very brink of extinction and now they are a rare sight in the waters around the land that bears their name.

An area of my life that still brought me joy was time spent on the ocean in my little waka. I launched it into the ocean each day from my new home, the sheltered Te Haruhi Bay, right at the tip of the Whangaparāoa Peninsula. Ngāti Kahu had abandoned this special place after defeat at the hands of Ngāpuhi warriors. The soil conditions of this sheltered bay were ideal to grow food in, and it marked the halfway point on the well travelled route between the Waitematā Harbour and Mahurangi. These were some of the main reasons why Ngāti Kahu had built a pā here, the only major settlement on the entire peninsula.

My father Jack had always told me that the waters of my home were rich with whales (although I knew this to be true as **Whangaparāoa** literally means bay of whales). I always made sure to look out for these magnificent creatures of the deep that visited every year. I felt an almost spiritual connection with them, after all, whales were fellow creatures of water, destined to live long mysterious lives.

The signing of the Mahurangi Purchase affected my new home too. The peninsula was included in land claimed by Hauraki tribes that was sold. The survivors of Ngāti Kahu returned to their traditional home to challenge the claim but when the sale went through they became homeless. Some continued to live on the land as the new Pākehā owners found it difficult to access, grow crops, or set up sheep and cattle farms due to the remote location and poor quality soil. It was not until the 1880's that the first of the Shakespear family would arrive, building a large homestead, with felled kauri trees (near the site of the old pā) which still stands today. Blanche Shakespear would live on in the house until her death in 1950, when the land was sold to the Auckland Council, which eventually created Shakespear Regional Park.

Te Haruhi Bay is now enjoyed by all sorts of people and it is great to see that this beautiful place is embracing its shared history. The large pest control fences that surround the park will mean a return of some of the **bird species** that I grew up with returning. The legacy of the Shakespear family and the Ngāti Kahu people, the main custodians of the land, is secure for all the people of the now heavily populated Whangaparāoa Peninsula.

1) Which tribe sold the Whangaparāoa as part of the Mahurangi Purchase?

- a) Ngāpuhi
- b) Ngāti Kahu
- c) Hauraki Tribes

2) What does the Māori word **Whangaparāoa** actually mean?

- a) Sheltered bays.
- b) Place of the sperm whales.
- c) Bay of whales.

3) What reasons did Wikitoria state for her almost spiritual connection with whales?

4) How did Ngāti Kahu members continue to live on the peninsula, after it was no longer deemed to be their land?

- a) The Shakespear family let them stay on their land.
- b) Pākehā landowners were not on their land to know they were there.
- c) They rejected the findings of the court.

5) When did Shakespear Regional Park open?

- a) 1880
- b) 1950
- c) The story does not say.

6) What measure has best helped the return of native **bird species** to Te Haruhi Bay?

- a) A pest control fence.
- b) An acknowledgement of shared history.
- c) Making the area into a regional park.

7) List three reasons why Māori had a major settlement at Te Haruhi Bay.

8) According to the story, who are the main custodians of the land?

9) Why did the Whangaparāoa Peninsula generally not prove to be a good area for farming? State two reasons.

10) What are two reminders, that exist to this day, of the ownership of the land by the Shakespear family?

Word Salad

There are many unusual words and phrases in the story you have just read. Complete the following tasks to ensure your understanding:

1) Find the definitions of the following English words.

- a) literally
- b) spiritual
- c) legacy
- d) remote
- e) custodian

2) Use each of the five words/phrases in five separate sentences using your own words.

Parts of Speech: Prepositions

Prepositions usually come before a noun or pronoun and give the position of that word. Identify each preposition in the following sentences:

- a) The boat crested over the small waves.
- b) The birds arrived after the pests were controlled.
- c) The whale was waiting in the bay.

Did You Know?

As the story states, Ngāti Kahu had their land claimed by the Hauraki Tribes and sold as part of the Mahurangi Purchase. The tribe did mount a challenge to the sale which they saw as illegal, but they were not as fortunate as Wikitoria's tribe Ngāti Rongo. In 1854 the sale of the land went through leaving Ngāti Kahu homeless and penniless. Many tribe members lived in exile near Muriwai or in the Waikato. Some stayed on the peninsula until the 1890's as there were so few settlers.



Local Histories / Mātauranga Māori

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