



*The pouwhenua above Ōrewa Bridge, and Stony Homestead in Millwater, provide places where we can still see local Ōrewa history.*

When the Te Ara Tahuna walkway was opened in 2011 I made sure that I was one of the first on the path around the Ōrewa Estuary. Nearly two centuries had passed since I had died and now grey hair peeped out from under my large brimmed hat, and the skin on my face was wrinkled like crumpled paper. The world had gotten itself into a big hurry. Cyclists, runners and old people on their mobility scooters zoomed past me.

When I was young, the estuary had been an important place for tribes to gather seafood. There had been a pā and settlement of the Ngāti Whatua tribe on the hill above where the Ōrewa Bridge now stands. It is now dominated by homes, the only clue to its past, the pouwhenua that stands a silent watch on the cars and trucks crossing the water, instead of waka. It was here that a famous Ngāti Whatua ancestor, Pokopoko, had killed a mighty **taniwha** (a lizard-like monster) in the deep pool it called its home. This taniwha ate people that walked the track from the west coast to the east. The taniwha can still be seen if you look closely at the pouwhenua.

Near the bottom of Māori Hut Road I rested on a small bench under the shade of a tree whose branches dipped into calm waters. I used to work here and eat the plentiful shellfish, leaving their shells in a neat pile. It amused me to see that archeologists had now taken my rubbish and placed it under glass as proof of Māori activity! This area was very important to the early gumdiggers because there was a freshwater stream for drinking. My gum digging crew **dug up** the ancient kauri that had fallen, travelled down the river and had been buried. My job was to use my tough hands to feel the underside of the trunk for the hardened gum resin, break it off, and sell it in Auckland. Here the kauri gum was polished until it earned its nickname of liquid gold. Pākehā women around the world wore the golden swirls as jewellery, very different to Māori who used it as chewing gum in its softened form and as an important ingredient in the art of Tā moko or tattooing.

The original pākehā homestead, Stony Cottage, built in the 1850's still stands at the end of the estuary. Now however it has been swallowed up by a thousand new homes built on the rolling pastures of green grass.

- 1) Where can you see the taniwha today?
  - a) You cannot, it is gone.
  - b) In the deep pool under the bridge.
  - c) Carved into the powhenua.
- 2) What was the name of the taniwha?
  - a) Pokopoko
  - b) Pouwhenua
  - c) Taniwha
  - d) The story does not state.
- 3) Explain in three steps the process that the kauri tree took before Wikitoria and her crew dug it up.
- 4) Provide evidence from the story that explains why Wikitoria thinks the world had gotten itself into a big hurry.
- 5) What is the oldest structure/building mentioned in the story?
  - a) Stony Cottage
  - b) Māori Hut.
  - c) Ngāti Whatua Pā.
- 6) What is the clue mentioned in the story that tells of the estuary's Māori past?
  - a) Te Ara Tahuna Walkway
  - b) The powhenua by Ōrewa Bridge.
  - c) Ngāti Whatua Pā
- 7) List three uses for kauri gum.
- 8) What was the 'rubbish' that archaeologists put under glass?
- 9) Where was the important stream that carried fresh water for gumdiggers?
- 10) Describe how kauri gum got the name 'liquid gold'?

### 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) crumpled
  - b) mighty
  - c) plentiful
  - d) ingredient
  - e) pasture

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

### Parts of Speech: Pronouns

Pronouns are words that we use to refer to, or in place of, people. Identify each pronoun in the following sentences:

- a) Her arms were under the thick log.
- b) The fresh water felt cold to his hand.
- c) Wikitoria helped them by catching food.

### Did You Know?

*Looking to the ocean from the pouwhenua, you can see a small concrete box near where the ocean meets the estuary. This was created in world war two and housed two soldiers that trained their guns along the length of Ōrewa Beach. This 'pillbox' was a defensive measure to stop what many believed would be an invasion of the country by Japanese Imperial forces. Thankfully the invasion never came but the pillbox remains.*

