Ngātokowaru Marae, and Ngāti Pareraukawa

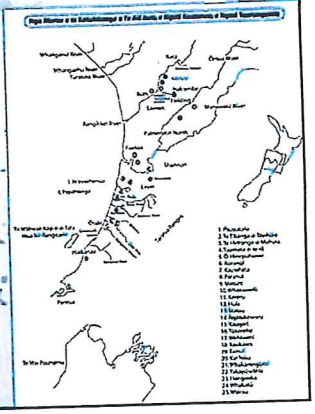
Levin Landfill Hearing
September 2016

Rachael Selby

Marae from Bulls to Wairau

23 marae - Bulls - Porirua - belong to the Confederation of iwi:

- Ngāti Raukawa
- Te Āti Awa
- Ngāti Toarangatira



Ngātokowaru Marae complex
Early whare in 1800s
Whare tupuna opened 1900.
This house in March 1978.

Whare Tupuna completed with voluntary labour
Current dining room completed in stages from 1981.

Values: kaitiakitanga

- Belong to the land – tangata whenua
- Papatūānukū – mother earth
- People cannot *own* land
- Inter-linked and responsible
- Waterways & water – essence of life
- Protect from Pollution
- Disrespect land & water - perilous

Ngātokowaru Marae & Ngāti Pareraukawa

- Located beside the Hōkio Stream, Lake Horowhenua, Te Moana o Raukawa since 1820s
- Ngāti Kikopiri to the south, Ngāti Huia to the north
- 20+ Ngāti Raukawa marae located between the Rangitikei River and Ōtaki River
- Neighbours of Muaūpoko iwi

Māori values

- Lake, stream, "drains" veins arteries to sea, coastline, land, ground water
- Tangata whenua are part of this
- Tupuna – connected for a thousand years
- Left us with the responsibility to care
- No matter where we reside, NZ or overseas

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

- Guarantee of *te tino rangatiratanga*
- *Full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their lands and estates, forests, fisheries and other properties*
- Responsibility to treat respectfully
- Current disrespect never foreseen

Tuna oral history project

- Ministry of Fish announced intention to add tuna/eel to the QMS – 2001
- Quota based on catch history
- Oral history project recorded significance of tuna to iwi
- 25 Kaumātua from iwi were interviewed
- What has been your experience of the stream?

Hōkio and Horowhenua value

- Environment provided abundance – quality and quantity
- Water: Lake, streams, moana
- Walk to Ngāti Huia and Poroutawhao and Ngāti Kikopiri
- Supported one another

Joanna 1920-2011

- Brought up at marae
- *"The most important thing was the eels"*
- Te kai o te rangatira
- Went with Grandpa to get eels
- Lived in 'luxury'
- Lifeline

Grandpa's lessons (b.1855)

Learned to fish for tuna, to clean preserve and cook

Bathed, swam, travelled on banks of stream from1920s

Our history

- 1900 – families living at Hōkio
- Environment provided for families
- Ema Hāpai had 14 children
- 10 lived in Horowhenua 1880-1975
- Time of abundance
- Lake, stream, land and sea

Joanna Jacob & Pataka

Murimanu 1927-2008

Courting and eeling

- Threw eels to Doreen to catch on the banks
- Described pā, eel boxes, construction and care
- Cleared the stream section by section
- Fished all year in lake
- Swam and played
- Eels thick against his legs
- Then came the sewage

Murimanu and Doreen

Cultural Impact of discharge of raw sewage

- Families abandon the marae - 1953
- Sold to Jo Knight on the west
  - His piggery 1953 - 1999)
- 2 generations lived with that
- Forbidden to go to the creek
- Sold block east of marae

Lake to Stream

1975-2016

- 1953 LBC decision to pollute
- 1975 Submissions to Catchment Bd.
- 1979 Hearings
- Decision forced on Council to remove effluent
- Applied for an extension
- 1980s Pot established

Water – the source of life

- Spiritual tikanga – blessing
- Recreational – swimming and playing
- Tuna heke in March
- 'They would know' - connected
- Māori Battalion in PN March 1940

The Piggery

- 1953 piggery established
- Small and managed
- 1990 1200 breeding sows
- Pollution over-powering, degrading
- The marae that stinks
- A decade of appeals

Concurrently

- Levin Rubbish Dump
- Submissions to Council to manage
- 30 years of appeals to Council
- Decision to go to a Super dump
- Recommended $50 million cleanup
- This situation was foreseen
- Who will pay?

Today

- Loss of connection to land
- Pākehā values promote temporary ownership, exploitation
- Mobility; absence of responsibility because they do not belong
- Here today gone tomorrow
- Decisions have no consequences for their children

Ngātokowaru

Surrounded by Levin's effluent

Joanna's 7 children

- Born 1947-59
- Never saw an eel box
- No knowledge or skills transmitted about living at Hōkio
- Never swam in or went to the Stream ... Forbidden
- Loss of history, knowledge, te reo & skills
- Cultural impacts

Cultural Impact

- 60 years of appealing for environmentally sensible decisions
- 3 generations of Ngāti Pareraukawa have become "submitters"
- Described as 'troublemakers" by regional and local Councils
- Insulting and lacks insight

Murimanu – 5 children

- No knowledge or skills about life on the Stream
- None could build an eel pā or box 20th Century
- G'children returning to learn & seek knowledge
- Moving home and committing to marae and values

Hōkio Stream (now)

Study interviews -outcomes

- Young people inspired by interviews
- Environmental consciousness
- Seek knowledge from elders
- Value & store interviews for future generations
- Challenge decisions of Councils which impact on marae – 35 year consents!
- Future focused

Cultural Impacts

- Abandonment of homes at marae
- Loss of cultural knowledge & skills
- Loss of survival skills and expertise
- Inability to trap, store, clean, cook eels and other fish
- Loss of culture, language and values
- Inability to pass on traditional skills
- No-one under 35 could speak Māori

Councils

- They work together – divide and rule
- Set conditions and appear to 'collude'
- Leachate contamination in stream – predicted
- Odour must be eliminated
- Officers are temporary – we are not!

Cultural impacts

- Young people question why their parents know so little, why they 'rejected' the Māori world and ways of living. (Spare them from pollution)
- Sense of grief and loss is created

Recommendations

- Cancel all consents
- Budget to clean up lake to sea environment over 20 years
- Provide cultural training for staff

Echoes from the Poisoned Well

Global Memories of Environmental Injustice

Edited by
Sylvia Hood Washington, Paul C. Rosier,
and Heather Goodall

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Guardians of the Land

A Maori Community's Environmental Battles

Rachael Selby and Pataka Moore

In New Zealand and throughout many parts of the world, people dream of having a house by the sea. The sight of rolling ocean waves in winter, expanses of blue and green in the summer, seaspray, changing colors as clouds move by, millponds on still clear days, footprints in the sand, rocky shores, sunsets and sunrises, crashing waves breaking on rocks or sand, all capture the imagination.

Mountain folk might dream of a cabin by the lake. White capped mountains framing lakes, fresh water trout, the peace and solitude in the evening, are seductive. River folk bond just the same with wide expansive rivers sheltering salmon or steady flowing streams which conjure up memories of paddling, boating, and warm summer days. For many indigenous communities, bodies of water invoke sadness at the loss of access to traditional fishing grounds and in New Zealand, bodies of water have become sites of pollution and effluent disposal.

This chapter examines a brief history of one indigenous community in Aotearoa New Zealand, a community which in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries lived beside a clear sparkling stream, fed by a clear sparkling lake half a mile away.

New Zealand is located in the south Pacific Ocean, 1600 kilometers east of Australia. It is made up of two main islands, Te Ika a Maui, the fish of Maui, and Te Waipounamu, the greenstone land. They were unimaginatively renamed North Island and South Island by the British colonizers. New Zealand is about the same size as California, but with a population of four

million people, of whom the indigenous Maori make up 15 percent. Maori are the descendants of the Polynesian settlers who arrived in Aotearoa—New Zealand in the tenth century.

As with many indigenous communities, settlements were established beside bodies of water. Water is valued not only for its spiritual, healing, and cleansing qualities, but as a source of food, for human hygiene, animal use, and as a means of transport. It was also used as a place to store food, as is a refrigerator in the modern world.

The tribal group discussed here, are called Ngati Raukawa. We are the descendants of Raukawa, who lived in the seventeenth century. One of his descendants was a woman called, Pareraukawa, an ancestress who lived in the eighteenth century. Her descendants are collectively known Ngati Pareraukawa, the descendants of Pareraukawa. We identify ourselves as such, to this day. The tribal group, numbering several thousand people living throughout the world, is associated with land and bound by familial ties.

The land base from which the extended family or tribal group draws its strength and which it identifies as "home" is the land and marae, called Ngatokowaru, also named after an ancestor. The marae is the Maori word for the land on which the community lives. A marae typically includes a large carved house, with a pitched roof. It is built as one large meeting room, where families discuss issues of importance, where church services may be held, and it is also used for sleeping on mattresses on the floor at night. Other buildings include a kitchen and communal dining room which seats from 100–200 or more people. There is an ablution block, with showers, toilets and a laundry and other buildings for storage of equipment. Marae vary is size. Some are surrounded by family homes. Others such as Ngatokowaru, had families living and farming in the immediate environs until the early 1950s. Most marae communities also have a designated family cemetery. The dead are brought to the marae for three days mourning following death, then farewelled and buried in a family cemetery. The families associated with Ngatokowaru have a family cemetery east of the marae closer to the shores of the lake. It is wistfully referred to as: the warms sands of Raumatangi. Family members anticipate that they will return from wherever they are around New Zealand and the globe to the warm sands of Raumatangi when they die.

This ancestral marae is nestled on the south bank of the Hokio Stream. It is five kilometers from the Tasman Sea to the west, and enjoys a view across the lake to the east of the mountain range, known as the Tararua Ranges. The marae community has been located at Hokio since the early nineteenth century and faces the sun rising over the Tararua ranges. The area from the sea to the lake is known as Hokio.

The community was located itself beside the Hokio Stream because it provided food: shellfish, flounder, an abundance of eel, and freshwater crayfish.

The stream was also used as a place in which to store food. Each year when the eels migrated from the lake to the sea in the late summer and early autumn, between February and April, the family trapped the eels and stored them in large wooden boxes in the stream to be used over the winter as a source of protein. The boxes were about a meter in length and about half a meter by half a meter in height and width. Small holes at both ends ensured that the water continued to flow through the box and the eels were prevented from escaping as a lid was secured to the top. Eels were, for centuries, a staple food consumed by Maori communities several times a week. As families moved to town or to other blocks of land to live away from the immediate vicinity of the stream, they maintained their eel boxes in the stream and returned to collect their eels for dinner, using the stream as a place to store food. Eels varied in length from half a meter to two meters in length.

Across the lake, the town of Levin grew in size in the late 1800s, as thousands of immigrants arrived in New Zealand from Europe and the new colonial provincial government bought land from people who did not own it. This was of no consequence to the land-hungry settlers. They wanted to build a railway from the capital city, Wellington, sixty miles to the south, linking it to the largest city, Auckland, five hundred miles to the north. It was believed a railway through the North Island would open up the country for development. The settler population increased from 2,000 in 1840 to 772,719 in 1901 while the Maori population decreased from 100,000 in 1840 to 43,143 in 1901 (Durie 1994: 37).

The settlers introduced a majority-rules system of democracy which took away any political influence from indigenous Maori. The treaty which had been signed in 1840 between the English Queen and the Maori Chiefs, was disregarded by the settler government and indeed the politicians anticipated that within time the Maori population would die out. A government official, Dr. Isaac Featherston "echoed liberal European sentiment in the late nineteenth century when he spoke of the responsibility to 'smooth the pillow of the dying race'" (King 1997: 38). This was the benign patronizing attitude which abounded.

The Maori families which built houses at the marae in the late 1800s worked the land, milked cows and found multiple uses for the stream as a source of food and water for the community. Children who were born and raised there in the latter part of the century were taken to the local school by horse and trap or walked the dusty road to the town until a school bus service began. The community was self-sufficient, providing for its members and bringing in cash by selling surplus crops to the market and by selling milk to the local dairy factory. The matriarch, Ema, who bore fourteen children in the mid and late 1800s, warned them never to sell any of their land to the white settlers. Despite her father having been an Englishman who lived in New Zealand within a Maori community, and despite her having had a

boarding school education in Wellington, she foresaw the disasters which would befall the community if they sold their land to the hungry Pakeha (white foreigner) who would become a neighbor and potentially cause problems for the community.

Ema's children and grandchildren, who grew up at the marae and lived through to the mid-twentieth century, used the stream as a place to gather food and for recreation: for swimming, diving from the trees and banks, and to learn from parents the techniques of catching and cleaning fish. They learned about caring for the stream: clearing weeds, planting the banks, disposing of parts of fish not used for food. They learned about how to construct traps for different species of fish in each of the seasons, how to preserve the food, store it and present it to visitors. They learned the most appropriate methods of preserving food taken by travelers on a journey. When relatives came from a distance with food from other regions, the family used the stream as a storehouse for the food they brought with them.

In the autumn, when the corn was harvested, some was placed in bags and lowered into the stream where, over the next few weeks, it was left immersed in the water to ferment as the cool clear water washed over and through it. It was for many years a delicacy, eaten with cream or milk from the dairy cows on the farm. The family grew their own vegetables, churned the butter, collected eggs from the ducks and chickens, and fished in the stream. They were self-sufficient.

Those who lived beside the stream had a responsibility and an obligation to it: to maintain its health and well-being. Maori believe that the relationship with the environment is one of interdependence. We are guardians of the environment and reap the benefits. The land, the stream and the lake provide sustenance for us and in turn we do not misuse that which provides for us. For many generations Maori communities lived in harmony with the environment and in turn the environment provided.

In 1952, the town council across the lake made the decision to discharge its sewage into the lake. The western side of the lake is located less than a kilometer east of the community and is the lake from which the stream flows. Within a short time, the raw sewage floated in the lake and down the stream beside the marae. It was a filthy statement about the price of progress and a warning about the power of the council. Children were gathered up and forbidden to go near the stream. A fence at the top of the slope was designated the boundary and the community stayed on one side, the stream on the other.

The families moved away, abandoning the marae as a place to live. "Civilization" and urbanization were the new realities and the children born after the Second World War were frequently brought up believing that the most advantageous stance to take was to abandon their indigenous heritage and to become "European." Their parents often thought the best approach was to

ensure they were literate in English and that they fitted snugly into the white man's world. Those who were literate in Maori deliberately spoke only English to their children. Many never admitted to their children that they knew the Maori language. It was an effective means of forcing the children to be literate in English and provided opportunity for the children to live more effectively in the European world.

Durie (1994: 37) claims, "The separation of Maori from their land had social as well as economic consequences. Land was part of the internalized identity." For the descendants of Pareraukawa, it forced many to focus on surviving in the Pakeha world leaving the Maori world behind them. For those who struggled, it was a double blow as they also lost the knowledge and skills associated with the Maori world based at the marae. When they returned to the marae to Maori functions, they were like fish out of water. Many fitted uneasily in both worlds, the European and the Maori.

In 1953, one of the few families which remained living full-time at the marae sold seven acres on the western boundary to Joe Knight. The land bordered the stream and while he did not live there, he built a pig sty. Each day he arrived with drums of food scraps to feed and fatten the seven sows and their thirty piglets. Ema's words about never selling to the Pakeha were not heeded.

The community had experienced dramatic change in a very short period. At the conclusion of the Second World War, several families had been self-sufficient living off the land and the stream. Within a decade they had a growing community's sewage poisoning the stream on the north and the lake to the east. As the piggery on the west also grew, the elders who had inherited the marae from their ancestors grieved that they would be the last generation to use the marae, the last to practice their culture and promote the values of their ancestors. As each one died, their families returned them to the marae where the extended family returned to farewell them in the traditional manner over three days prior to burial. They were then buried in the family cemetery beside the lake.

Over the next twenty years, the marae was used almost exclusively for ceremonial occasions, not as a place of permanent residence. The dead were farewelled before being carried across the fields to the cemetery on the hill located between the marae and the lake. The cemetery had been chosen for its prime location overlooking the lake and beside the stream, and for its site near to the marae. The generations buried there had never anticipated the environmental disasters which were created by the town growing in size in the distance across the lake.

The new settlers who had migrated to New Zealand over the previous seventy years had little sympathy for the indigenous community or for their customs and values. The settlers saw themselves as "transforming the Maori from barbarism to civilized life" (Walker 1985: 73). There had been little

thought given to the impact that a growing community would have on the lake and stream, and the consequent disposal of waste in the area. Values and beliefs which were different from those espoused around the town council's table were disregarded. Appeals against the decision that the lake was the best place for sewage were regarded as attempts to be obstructive. The brand of democracy and "civilized life" which had been imported to New Zealand from Britain was that the majority ruled and minority opinion was irrelevant. The Maori custom of debating openly with all issues on the table until a consensus was reached, was seen as time wasting and long winded. That Maori people were left feeling disenfranchised was of no consequence.

A further blow which has had long term consequences occurred in the 1960s. The council made a decision to relocate the town's rubbish dump to Hokio. A landfill was created a quarter of a mile south of the marae community. The decision effectively meant that the marae was surrounded by the rubbish and effluent from the town. Such was the price of progress.

The effect on the tribal community was they came to believe the marae was doomed. The policy of assimilation was promoted by government. The last members of the generation which had been born in the ancestral home made sentimental trips back to the land and marae. Ema's youngest daughter maintained the lawns and grounds with help from nieces and nephews for many years, though some wondered why they bothered as months would pass by without anyone using the buildings. When a death would occur, those who heard the news would travel to the marae to assist with the hosting of visitors and mourners, cooking for them, feeding them, and making beds in the old meeting house.

Many of the family lost the use of the Maori language during this postwar period, and the values and beliefs of the people became subsumed within the majority culture. Maori became relegated to the position of being a minority culture in their own land without a voice in political or decision-making circles.

In 1975, a group of trustees of the tribe noted the deteriorating condition of many marae in the region which in some locations, were all but abandoned. They talked long into the night about whether the Maori culture and traditions would die out completely or whether this generation should revive and rejuvenate the Maori traditions before they were lost. They made a decision that was to change the future of the people.

They reviewed the status of the tribal group as a whole and noted that the language was seriously endangered, that few people under thirty-five could speak the Maori language, that the educational attainment of the tribal group was poor, that if a program of revival was not undertaken, Maori would no longer exist. (Winiata 1979). They noted that most of the marae where the sub-tribal groups were located, throughout the lower North Island, were in a state of disrepair, neglected and reflected the suffering of the people. Nga-

tokowaru Marae, on the southern bank of the Hokio Stream, stood lonely and seldom used.

A group of the descendants of Pareraukawa met in the mid 1970s and decided to begin by building a new meeting house. It would be larger than the small house in which they were sitting, which had been completed in 1900. The new house would face the Tararua ranges and the lake, be fully carved and adorned in traditional style. This decision brought dozens of families back to the marae every weekend as the new house was planned, and grew up from the ground from 1976. It became a labor of love as the men gathered every Saturday morning to build and the women plaited the wall panels and helped with painting rafters. After years of work, the house was finally opened in March 1978, a statement to the nation and the town across the lake that Maori language and culture would be revived, that we regarded the marae as our home and our traditions were worth maintaining and should be cherished. The dawn opening was attended by over two thousand people.

On the western boundary, the pig sty had grown into a piggery. The smell was always present when families arrived for a meeting, a wedding, a church service, a family reunion or other celebration or cultural activity. It was to take another twenty years to rid ourselves of an activity which became a source of considerable embarrassment to us and to our pride in our ancestral home.

After the meeting house had been formally opened in 1978, the sub-tribe undertook to learn more about ourselves as a people. Many of our family committed to reviving and promoting our language, learning about our history and many committed to increasing their educational attainment and that of their children. With increased confidence in ourselves and in our abilities, the community took on the local council and voiced opposition to the continued discharge of sewage into the lake and the stream.

A series of public hearings were conducted in 1979 and 1980 in which the families of the sub-tribe opposed the council, the town, and the continued pollution of the lake. They were joined by local people who supported the restoration of the lake. The battle to persuade the board sitting at the decision-making table was intense. The council employed "experts" to assure the board that the effluent was treated to such a high standard that it was almost "drinkable" by human beings. The tribal families urged the board to decline the council's application for consent to continue pouring effluent into the lake.

The outcome was that in the early 1980s, the board hearing the submissions granted consent to the council to divert the effluent from the lake and pipe it directly into the stream. Initially the community was devastated; however, when the conditions were reviewed it was found that the conditions were so stringent in terms of the quality of the effluent treatment required,

that the council was unable to meet them. They were forced to build a pipeline from the treatment plant located east of the lake, westward to a land-based collection point. The negative impact was that the site chosen to build the land-based holding place, was again at Hokio, in the locality of the marae on its south side. Hokio was confirmed as the region's effluent disposal area.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the small piggery on the western boundary of the marae had grown in size and operation. By the 1990s it was a large operation with 1200 breeding sows and thousands of piglets being fattened for the market. The piggery generated gallons of effluent and the offensive odors drifted from the piggery across the marae, wafted into the dining room and meeting house as families sat down for breakfast, lunch, or the evening meal. The next battle began: to rid ourselves of the flies and odious stench surrounding the marae, particularly in summer evenings when we gathered to learn about our history, traditions, and customs—those precious gifts handed down from our ancestors and which we wanted to pass on to our children. The marae community had, over the last twenty years of the twentieth century, grown, revived, reenergized, and recommitted to ensuring that we leave the marae stronger than it was in 1975.

The owners of the piggery argued that in order to operate a viable business they needed a thousand breeding pigs. The marae community argued that the land had been gifted to us by our ancestors, and that we would never sell it. We had a responsibility to care for it and for the stream. It appeared by the end of the twentieth century we had reached an impasse.

In 1998, the piggery owners were required to apply for resource consent under the Resource Management Act 1991, to continue their farming operation, but under stricter conditions. The marae committee wrote submissions asking that the offensive odors be eliminated. The owners of the piggery suggested that planting a belt of trees between the piggery and the marae would reduce the terrible offensive odors. The marae committee stood its ground and demanded elimination of the odors. In the middle of 1999, the Commissioners granted the piggery owners a further six month consent to operate the business. The time was a period during which they were required to build an effective system to more effectively deal with effluent on the property, the main cause of the offensive odors. In December 1999, the piggery owners closed down their operation and sold the remaining pigs. They decided they would not comply with the consent requirements.

In January 2000, the family representatives gathered for the first meeting of the new year. The Marae Committee Minute Book records, "It was noted that the Bierstekers no longer have a resource consent to operate the piggery on the western boundary and that it is unlikely that they would get one again without having to comply with strict standards in terms of effluent disposal, control of odor and cleanliness. A year ago they had over 1200 breeding pigs on the property—which produced waves of offensive odors at the marae.

The property is now pig-free and the land and buildings are for sale. The marae is odorless and relatively free of flies."

The sixteen family members who had traveled to the marae for the first meeting in the new millennium were silent and reflective. For the younger people present, they could not remember a time when the air at the marae did not stink. The smell from the piggery had worsened over the previous twenty-five years, but for those under twenty-five it had always had an offensive smell in the air. People gently sniffed the warm midsummer evening air, hardly believing what their noses confirmed.

We had come to believe that the place would always have an offensive smell, that we would not be able to change that. No one spoke. Then, an elderly aunt was reminded of a saying from her past when someone proposes something quite preposterous and quietly she said, "Well, pigs might really fly!" Her voice broke the silence and began a quiet rumbling of laughter, a semi-hysterical laughter. We had begun the new millennium with a win, an important win. We might really have clean air, a sweet-smelling place to leave to our grandchildren and our great grandchildren. In 1950, our great grandmother had left us a clean, sweet-smelling marae, a clean, clear stream full of fish-life and a source of clean water. In fifty years, we had seen more damage done to the environment around us than all the generations on the earth before us.

Our ancestors had not mismanaged and mistreated the land, the stream, the lake, or the seashore. The Maori people of New Zealand claim special responsibility for the environment and claim guardianship of the earth mother and all the gifts of the land. The price of progress has been that becoming a minority in our own land, results in injustice. Ridding our environment of a piggery was a significant move forward.

In 2004, the town council announced that the waste management plan for the next thirty-five years included the expansion of the landfill site south of the marae. They had commenced the building of massive pits which would be lined and filled with rubbish from neighboring counties. This would provide an income for the local council as they now proposed bringing refuse from other districts. In a letter to the Marae Committee in April 2004, they assured the marae community that the liner would be "effective in stopping all or almost all leachate from entering the ground water. . . . Whether refuse comes into the landfill from within our district or from outside of it is not considered by council to be a matter of significance." It is a matter of significance for the landowners at Hokio.

In 2000, the Marae Committee acting on behalf of a community now numbering several thousand people, thought that we had begun to make progress. The effluent had been removed from the lake in the 1980s. It had not been discharged into the stream for nearly twenty years. The piggery, so offensive for nearly thirty years, was gone. We now face the prospect of a

super landfill site to the south and again it appears that the council is driven by economic gain, not by environmental concerns.

There are other environmental issues. On the south there are many acres of market gardens. The farmers use chemicals on the land in large quantities. The run-off into the streams is considerable. It washes into streams which feed into the lake. In the summer the nutrients cause algal blooms. In the winter, the growth settles on the bottom of the lake and decomposes on the lakebed. The decomposition uses oxygen, depriving the fish of the oxygen they need to survive. The effluent is not directly discharged into the lake, but there are other poisons in its place.

The past twenty-five years has seen a new generation take pride in being Maori, in claiming the marae as their ancestral home and in claiming their indigenous ancestry. They have learned the Maori language and committed to the revival of Maori as a living language. There is a commitment to maintain the marae and its environment. The stream banks beside the marae have been cleared of willows and other species. The family has committed to planting native species of trees on the banks. In the distance, closer to the lake, the wetlands are drained and perhaps gone forever.

Each year when the eels migrate to the sea in the autumn, a group of young men gathers to catch the eels and teach the boys how to trap, clean, and prepare the eels, just as their ancestors did a century and more ago. They clean and prepare them, cook them, and take them to the homes of the elders who remember the days when their grandfather took them to the stream. The knowledge has been gathered from the elders who are overjoyed that the stream is clean again, that the knowledge is not lost, that there are young men interested in the way they did things when they were young. The smell of eels cooking brings back joyous memories for them. These young people have reconnected to the land and the stream. They do not need any reminder of the special qualities and significance of the stream for the tribe. The fence is still standing at the top of the bank, but when one looks down to the stream, it is no longer a thick sludge, the water is clear and there is life in it again.

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