



NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY



This document is made available by The New Zealand Archaeological Association under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

To view a copy of this license, visit
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>.

Contested Ground: Turuturu-Mōkai Pā, Hāwera, Taranaki, New Zealand

Kelvin Day¹

ABSTRACT

This paper documents the changing symbolism of Turuturu-mōkai pā, Hāwera, Taranaki. This can be divided into three phases: firstly, its construction, subsequent conquering and abandonment; secondly, its gazetted as a Scenic Reserve, followed by a campaign for its 'restoration' and associated community pride; and finally, its return to iwi as part of the Ngāti Ruanui Settlement process. From the 1930s through until the late 1950s, Turuturu-mōkai was the focus of unprecedented community attention, largely driven by the Pākehā community, and was a regular destination for visiting dignitaries. As such, the Pākehā community embraced the site as their own.

Keywords: PĀ, NGĀTI RUANUI, NGĀTI TŪPAEA, NGĀTI RĀKEI, TARANAKI, HAWERA.

INTRODUCTION

Situated on Turuturu Road approximately 2 km from Hāwera, Taranaki, is the pre-European Turuturu-mōkai pā (Q21/3) (Figs 1 and 2). The pā is of considerable size, consisting of two main levels which are surrounded by a large ditch, while the site itself is skirted on three sides by the Tawhiti Stream. Numerous rectangular pits are present on both levels. A short distance south of Turuturu-mōkai and separated from it by the Tawhiti Stream is a smaller pā, which both James Cowan (1983 [II]: 187) and John Houston (*The Hawera Star* 6 February 1932) call Te Umu-a-Tongahake (Q21/4). However, on the Survey Block Sheet (18/8) which dates from c. 1880, this pā is referred to as Pukakariki. Houston (ibid.) records a further four pā in the immediate environs, the name of one immediately to the west of Turuturu-mōkai being recorded on the Block Sheet as Te Tuaha or Waiwhakaata (Q21/121). Two of these ring-ditch pā (Q21/121, Q21/122 — now destroyed) can be seen in Figure 1.

Wanganui historian, T.W. Downes, writing to Houston in July 1938, noted that,

When I first saw Turuturu-mokai, there were human skulls and bones sticking out from the old walls in two or three places, apparently where slaves had been buried with the palisading. I looked for some of these last time I was up, but they were missing. (Houston 1958: 3)

These human remains could have also been the result of the battle that took place on the site as outlined below. Alternatively, W.F. Gordon stated that the pā was used "as a burial place till a few years ago" (*The Hawera and Normanby Star* 16 July 1918).

Surprisingly, Turuturu-mōkai does not feature in Elsdon Best's *The Pa Maori* (1975) although the nearby pā of Te Ruaki and Ōhangai are described. Similarly, the pā is not

¹ P.O. Box 315, New Plymouth, Taranaki, New Zealand. Email: kelvinmd@nettel.net.nz



Figure 1: Turuturu-mōkai pā (centre) with two satellite pā (now destroyed) upper left. This aerial photograph probably dates from the late 1940s. Photo: Puke Ariki, New Plymouth.

mentioned in S. Percy Smith's *History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast* (1910). This is somewhat curious, given both its spectacular size and associated history.

A few hundred metres to the north of Turuturu-mōkai can be found the site of the European Turuturumōkai² Redoubt, on part of which sits a massive stone monument. The redoubt is the typical form, square with bastions on two opposing corners. Turuturu Road has removed one of the bastioned corners. On 12 July 1868, a Māori force stormed the redoubt just before daybreak, killing 10 of the garrison. While they were able to enter the fortification, Māori failed to “dislodge a handful of defenders who held the tiny north-west and south-east bastions” (Prickett 1990: 29). They were finally relieved some hours later by an Armed Constabulary force from nearby Waihi Redoubt under Gustavus von Tempsky's command. Houston referred to this incident as “The Rorke's Drift of Taranaki” (*The Hawera Star* 14 July 1934), a comparison with the January 1879 incident during the Anglo-Zulu War where the small British garrison was nearly defeated by a considerably larger Zulu force. The phrase had been used in an earlier 1905 newspaper article.

Bromley (1981) records that a mere 20 years after the military engagement at Turuturumōkai Redoubt the site had been essentially forgotten by local Pākehā settlers, which is somewhat strange. A contractor, John Finlay, was employed to plough the paddock

² I have adopted the convention of Turuturu-mōkai when referring to the pā and Turuturumōkai for the European redoubt in order to make the distinction between the two sites in this paper.



Figure 2: The earliest known photograph of Turuturu-mōkai pā (centre left) taken probably in the early 1890s. Photo: Dr W.A. Lightbourne album, Puke Ariki, New Plymouth.

in which the redoubt was sited and during the course of this, uncovered a range of artefacts such as bullets, axes, ceramics and bottles. Curious as to their significance, he took them into Hāwera but could not get “a satisfactory answer to his questions about the site” (Bromley 1981: 137). Finally a nearby settler informed Finlay that he had been ploughing the site of the Turuturumōkai Redoubt and told him of the engagement which had taken place there in 1868.

This paper is concerned not so much with the archaeology of Turuturu-mōkai but rather with the symbolism that the pā has had, particularly within the Pākehā community, and the fact that for a large part of the twentieth century it is this community which has taken ‘ownership’ of the site and developed it as part of their identity.

CONSTRUCTION AND OCCUPATION

Cowan recorded that Turuturu-mōkai pā was constructed by members of the Ngāti Tūpaea³ hapū of Ngāti Ruanui “more than twelve generations” ago [in 1922] (Cowan 1983 [II]: 187). Houston (1958) repeats that same statement as to its builders, calculating that the pā was constructed some 400 years ago. Sole writes that it was Ngāti Rākei, who subsequently merged into Ngāti Tūpaea, who built the pā and he believes if the “whakapapa are correct,

³ The spelling of the hapū name has two variants—Tūpaea/Tūpaia. I have chosen the former spelling as that is what Sole (2005) uses in his history of Ngāti Ruanui.

then Turuturu Mōkai fell before the tupuna Tūpaea was born” (Sole 2005: 113). It is said that a bitter dispute arose between the people of Turuturu-mōkai and those of another hapū who resided at Taki Ruahine pā further south. The principal chief at Turuturu-mōkai at this time was Tutore, while Tahaehahawera was the chief at Taki Ruahine. An 1898 newspaper article contained a history of the site obtained from H.M. Stowell (Hare Hongi), who recorded that the pā had formerly been home to “seventy left-handed warriors” (*The Hawera and Normanby Star* 28 February 1898), who were the terror to all foes. Apart from the reference to these warriors and their left-handedness, the story is largely the same as that recounted below.

During a period of relative peace a plan was hatched by Tūraukawa Poroa of Taki Ruahine. A famed tohunga-tā-moko (tattooing expert) was staying at Taki Ruahine and his services were offered to the warriors of Turuturu-mōkai. The process of applying the moko using the traditional bone uhi (chisel) was a particularly painful one. Despite this, a large number of the warriors agreed to the process and had their buttocks and thighs tattooed. This resulted in their incapacitation and thus provided the perfect opportunity for the people of Taki Ruahine to attack Turuturu-mōkai. An easy victory was had and afterwards a number of “mōkai (smoke-dried heads) of the warriors were set on turuturu (stakes) as the final indignity” (Sole 2005: 114). From that time forth the pā was renamed to commemorate the event, its previous name having now long been forgotten. Gordon makes reference to a slave being killed and consumed on the site of the pā and that the original name honoured that event (*The Hawera and Normanby Star* 16 July 1918).

After this battle, Turuturu-mōkai was abandoned because of the tapu of the blood that had been spilled on it. This tapu remained in place until 12 July 1938 when a pou (post), carved by Henare Toka, was erected on the pā and a whakanoa (tapu removal) performed by elders Tonga Awhikau and Pouwhareumu Toi. This event will be returned to later.

RESERVE STATUS AND RECONSTRUCTION

Section 143, on which Turuturu-mōkai sits, consists of 50 acres (20 ha) and was awarded to C. Murphy, a military settler, in 1867 under the *New Zealand Settlements Act 1864*. In 1905, Turuturu-mōkai was set aside as a Historic Reserve of 14 acres, 1 rood, 17 perches (approximately 5.6 ha) under *The Scenery Preservation Act 1903*, having been purchased for £358 (*The Hawera & Normanby Star* 29 August 1905). Tenders were called for “47 chains [945.5 m] of fencing at Turuturu mokai pa” (*The Hawera & Normanby Star* 24 February 1906) in February 1906. In his 1906 presidential report to the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society, W.H. Skinner noted that the Royal Commission appointed to deal with scenery preservation had included Turuturu-mōkai pā among its Taranaki recommendations (*Taranaki Herald* 23 August 1906). The adjacent site (Section 329) of Turuturumōkai Redoubt, comprising 3 acres, 4 perches (approximately 1.2 ha), was reserved for a blockhouse site, being gazetted as such in 1871. This section was “subsequently vested in the Borough of Hawera ‘so that the fortifications standing thereon may be preserved’ and ‘the land utilized for recreation purposes by the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act 1901’” (Hāwera District Council 1986: 3).

The Hāwera Chamber of Commerce raised, in February 1898, the issue of not “making the best of the natural attractions in the vicinity of the town” (*The Hawera & Normanby Star* 28 February 1898) and that there was no inducement for visitors to remain. Turuturu-mōkai pā was specifically mentioned and that it was “sadly neglected — in fact no notice

was taken of it all” (ibid.). The article obviously aroused public interest as “Since public attention has been drawn by the Chamber of Commerce to the historic interest of Turuturumokai the place has been visited by scores of townspeople, who had hitherto never even heard of it” (*The Hawera & Normanby Star* 29 March 1898). The Chamber later requested Government to vest the site in the Hāwera Borough Council to ensure its long-term conservation.

In March 1900 the Governor, Lord Ranfurly, and Lady Ranfurly paid an informal visit to south Taranaki. Following a visit to the coastal township of Manaia the couple travelled to the Te Ngutu o te Manu battle site and inspected “the famous Turu-turu-Mokai fortifications” (*The Hawera & Normanby Star* 28 March 1900).

The Commissioner of Crown Lands, in November 1918, advised the Hāwera Borough Council that he was placing Turuturu-mōkai pā under their control and transferred £87.10.0 being monies accumulated from grazing rents. These funds were to be used to plant native trees and shrubs under the supervision of Mr V.C. Davies from the New Plymouth-based nursery business of Duncan and Davies.

In 1927 a bequest from the estate of C.C. Woods was received by the Hāwera Borough Council and under the terms of the bequest, the funds were to be put toward “a monument or other memorial [to] be erected to perpetuate the names of those who fell in defending the [Turuturumōkai] redoubt in 1868” (Bromley 1981: 137). A public subscription and a further donation from a Mr Beamish provided the necessary funds for this to happen. The memorial cairn, designed by the Hāwera architectural firm of Duffill and Gibson, was unveiled on 11 December 1929.

The adjacent pā, Te Umu-a-Tongahake, was purchased thanks to a then anonymous benefactor and added to the reserve in July 1936. The benefactor was Miss Jessie Buchanan along with her sister, Miss C.M. Buchanan. Jessie Buchanan’s keen interest in the reserve continued for the remainder of her life. This gave a total area for the reserve of twenty-six and a half acres (10.7 ha).

A deputation from the Hāwera Beautifying Society (Mrs J.E. Baker, Miss J.C. Buchanan and Messrs J.E. Campbell, J.S. Murray and L.A. Taylor) proposed to the Hāwera Borough Council, in September 1930, that a committee be appointed to control Turuturu-mōkai Reserve and that an annual grant be made by council to support their work. The council agreed to such a committee being formed and that the above individuals, together with a Mrs Douglas, be appointed. It was also agreed that “council meet accounts for labour and material authorised by [the] Committee to the extent of £25 p/a” (Hāwera Borough Council Minute Book 15 September 1930).

A further financial contribution was made towards the “improvement of the Turuturu Mokai Reserve” (Hāwera Borough Council Minute Book 16 February 1931) when Thomas Robson, a resident of nearby Normanby and a keen horticulturalist, left £100 in his will for such a purpose.

During the Depression of the early 1930s, a scheme was undertaken whereby unemployed men were used to ‘clean’ out the ditches and re-shape the banks of Turuturu-mōkai. This was the start of a project to completely rebuild the pā as it might have looked in pre-European times. The main driver for this project was James Campbell, Honorary Secretary Unemployment Committee and later Mayor of Hāwera.

The ‘restoration’ project appears to have largely been carried out in 1931. In May 1931 the members of the committee responsible for work projects for the unemployed visited a number of these, among them Turuturu-mōkai.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the tour was a visit to Turuturu-Mokai where active steps are being taken to reconstruct the old Maori redoubt [pā] to its original plan and to beautify the approaches. Here a big undertaking is in progress and already the idea in the minds of those responsible for the work is taking shape. It is believed that the redoubt is one of the oldest in Maori history, a contention that is supported by the fact that no Maori in this district has yet been able to give a connected account of its history. (*The Hawera Star* 18 May 1931)

It was further reported that an 'enthusiastic' committee comprising Hāwera residents Messrs J.E. Campbell, L.A. Taylor and J.S. Murray, Mesdames Baker, Douglas and Miss Buchanan were overseeing the work. Notably absent was any Māori representation. A swimming pool had been prepared and the entrance to the reserve had been planted with shrubs while a large number of ponga "for the kiosk or pavilion" (ibid.) had been donated. "On the redoubt [pā] itself trenches are being rebuilt and returfed and it is hoped in time to reconstruct the palisade. A large number of men are employed on this work" (ibid.).

As work progressed a number of visiting dignitaries were taken to see Turuturu-mōkai. Among these were Lord and Lady Bledisloe who visited Taranaki in early December 1931. As the Bledisloes were shown over the pā, Campbell explained the history of the site and outlined the work being undertaken. It was on this occasion that the first public reference to a tunnel on the site was made. "Mr Campbell said that only last week an elderly resident who visited Turuturu-Mokai told of a subterranean passage that existed in 1870 and extended from the top plateau and under the stream to Te Umu-a-tongahake on the other side" (*The Hawera Star* 11 December 1931). This piece of folklore was to be repeated by later commentators.

During February 1932 Hāwera celebrated its 50th jubilee. Among the planned events was one that was scheduled to take place on Turuturu-mōkai. A month earlier Campbell, along with a Mr W.A. Spragg, met with Mr and Mrs Scotty Panenui and Mr and Mrs Pokau on Turuturu-mōkai "with a view to selecting a site on which the Maori celebrations should be made" (*The Hawera Star* 18 January 1932). An area was selected that overlooked the Tawhiti Stream giving enough "space for 4000 to 5000 people to have an uninterrupted view of the display..." (ibid.). The Jubilee Committee asked permission from the Hāwera Borough Council to charge visitors an admission fee to this event.

The planned events had been devised to give the flavour of the 'Māori as he was'.

During this the whole process of cooking in old time Maori style will be shown. There will be five large "hangi" or boilers where will be cooked bullock, pigs, sheep, potatoes, kumeras [sic] and eels. The scheme of the proceedings has been warmly welcomed by the Maoris and their leaders. The wahines will make on the spot flax baskets such as were used in ancient times for serving food to guests. The special stones required for the cooking are also being collected for the occasion.

Special hakas and pois, which date back a long way, are being practised and with them will be old time chants and songs, in addition to later date music. These will be sung during the preparations for the hui-mo-te-kai, a gathering and feast.

Another feature that is under way is a series of old-time games to be given by the younger Maoris, games that appear to be dying out and that should be preserved.

Another attraction will be an eel spearing competition which will give an opportunity for all the Maoris present to show their skill. It is believed to be

unique in sports and may, therefore be termed a contest for the 'eel spearing championship of the world'. Each competitor will be given an allotted space in which to work (*The Hawera Star* 18 January 1932).

Heavy rain on the morning of the proposed event at Turuturu-mōkai resulted in the area being too wet underfoot and the venue for the activities was hurriedly transferred to the Hāwera Showgrounds, to the great disappointment of the Māori (from the Hāwera, Pātea and Waitōtara districts) camped at Turuturu-mōkai. While the planned hāngi and eel fishing competition could not take place, the other performances at the showground were enthusiastically received. Taranaki historian W.H. Skinner, visiting from New Plymouth, recorded in his diary that the change in venue was "a fortunate happening as the pa site could not possibly have accommodated the vast crowd – about 8000 – who had assembled" (Skinner Diary, 25 February 1932).

The work carried out in 1931 would appear to have been to re-dig the ditches and clean out the pits of Turuturu-mōkai. However, a more ambitious plan was proposed in 1936 that would see neighbouring Te Umu-a-Tongahake reconstructed into a pre-European pā, complete with palisading and buildings. Writing to the secretary of the Taranaki Māori Trust Board Campbell reported "... considerable progress with the scheme to reconstruct the outpost pa of Te Umu-a-Tongahake" (Letter to Taranaki Māori Trust Board from Campbell 3 December 1936). In the same correspondence Campbell says:

I have a sketch plan of the proposed work, and am in a position to say that all the necessary materials – manuka and punga can be procured. The Aka vine may present some difficulty, but an excellent substitute in supplejacks should be available. The cost is estimated [sic] at £200 and possibly members would consider the Board justified in making available a grant of money towards the cost. Before proceeding with the work I should appreciate any advice members might be willing and able to give, for it is my earnest desire that the reconstruction should conform in detail to West Coast ideals and tradition.

If a grant from your Board is available I hope it may be possible for Maori and Pakeha to celebrate together the Coronation of His Majesty King Edward VIII in May of next year on this historic spot (ibid.).

Six months later the Taranaki Māori Trust Board formally responded to Campbell's request saying that "as a result of a favourable consideration with which the Trust Board Members viewed the project, it was decided to vote out of the Trust Funds towards the scheme, the sum of £50.0.0" (Letter to Campbell from Taranaki Māori Trust Board 19 July 1937). The Taranaki Māori Trust Board appear to have been very supportive of the project to reconstruct Te Umu-a-Tongahake, in particular the leadership Campbell was taking, noting "... we feel in common with the Maori people in general, that we owe you a sense of gratitude as we know, the revival of such a historical landmark will undoubtedly be a revelation to the contented minds of our elders, who still hold pleasant memoirs of the Pa and its past" (ibid.). In the same letter the Board also acknowledged the value such a project would bring to the district as a scenic and historic resort and that "every encouragement possible" (ibid.) should be given to it. Campbell's response was to say that "the Council is very glad to know that it has they [sic] sympathy and support of your Board and the Maori people in this matter" (Letter to Taranaki Māori Trust Board from Campbell 22 July 1937).

It would appear that the ditches and pits on Te Umu-a-Tongahake were ‘cleaned’ out as they have a very similar profile to Turuturu-mōkai. For some reason this observation eluded Alastair Buist when he recorded the site in 1964, stating on the site record form “At least it hasn’t been restored as has Turuturumokai pa” (NZAA Site Record Form Q21/4). Some time in mid 1937 the restoration plan shifted from Te Umu-a-Tongahake to Turuturu-mōkai. Campbell wrote to the Taranaki Māori Trust Board enquiring if the £50 donation could be used on Turuturu-mōkai:

When I first approached your Board for assistance in this matter it was intended to concentrate on the Outpost Pa of Te Umu-a-Tongahake but recent considerations have indicated the desirability of proceeding with the bigger and more ambitious work of Turuturu-Mokai (Letter to Taranaki Māori Trust Board from Campbell 26 July 1937).

In the same letter Campbell again reinforced the philosophy that the work be a joint effort between Māori and Pākehā in order to “ensure that Turuturu-Mokai will be re-designed on lines traditionally and historically correct, and this indication of the interest of the Native people is clearly recognised and appreciated” (ibid.).

The response from the Taranaki Māori Trust Board secretary, Mr W. Wakarua, was favourable:

I personally consider this an appropriate move, as I understand that Turuturu-Mokai was a more famous redoubt, more known at any rate, to the present generation, and I have no doubt that the Board would readily accede to your request for its donation to be utilised in the reconstruction of the main pa (Letter to Campbell from Taranaki Māori Trust Board 27 July 1937).

The Board formally approved the use of the £50 donation on the new project in a letter to Campbell on 23 November 1937.

On the afternoon of 12 July 1938, to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the attack on the adjacent European redoubt, an ope whakanoa was held on Turuturu-mōkai. Taking part in this were Ngāti Ruanui elders, Pouwhareumu Toi and Tonga Awhikau, along with Hapi Love Wi Tako (Taranaki Māori Trust Board), Uru te Angina Wakarua (Secretary, Taranaki Māori Trust Board), Henare Toka (carver), Mr J.E. Campbell, and Hāwera lawyer and historian, John Houston. A specially carved pou (Fig. 3) “in a design purely of ancient Taranaki origin and significance” (Houston 1958: 12), the work of Toka, was erected on the pā. The purpose of this event was to “set the ancient evils at rest for ever” (Houston 1958: 11). Houston noted that pou faced west and explained:

When the elders set up the post, they carefully orientated the same so that the face looked directly into the sunset. Such ceremonies have to be carried out either at dawn or at sunset. In the present case, the elders were both old men, and our July weather is very wintry and cold. They elected to hold the ceremony at sunset. (Houston to Insull, 3 October 1957, Taranaki Regional Correspondence, HPT)

It is somewhat curious that such an event should take place after a considerable amount of work had already been undertaken on the pā seven years earlier in 1931, but it was probably

in response to the new project, which would see the site become a fully fortified pā once more. Also, the date of the event which marked 70 years since the attack on the nearby European redoubt raises some interesting symbolism, especially given that Turuturu-mōkai pā played no part in the attack on the redoubt.

The pou stands approximately 1.5 m high and is surrounded by a mānuka fence. It became known as the 'Post of Goodwill'. Soon after the pou was erected "vandals removed the paua eyes" (*The Hawera Star* 7 March 1955). The National (now New Zealand) Historic Places Trust Taranaki Regional Committee, largely driven by Houston, wanted to have a bronze



Figure 3: This photograph is thought to have been taken at the time of the visit to Turuturu-mōkai pā on 14 July 1938 by members of the North Canterbury Young Farmers Club. From left: John Houston, Mere Toka, Pikau Pokai, Tutea Pokai, Henare Toka, and Sarah Newman. Photo: Puke Ariki, New Plymouth.

Historic Places Trust plaque placed in concrete in front of the pou outlining its significance. However, while the Hāwera Borough Council, administrators of the reserve, were happy for this to happen, head office of the National Historic Places Trust were not. The Trust stated that "a pole within a pa was not considered to be worth marking, and that to adopt the principle of marking objects within historic sites would lend itself to reduplication of effort" (Pascoe to Insull 29 October 1957).

Two days after the dedication of the pou, a group of 60 North Canterbury Young Farmers on a tour of the North Island were formally welcomed on to Turuturu-mōkai. This ceremony

was performed by “Chief Pikau Pokau, Mr Henare Toka, Mrs Pokau and Mr Wana-i-rangi Toka, members of the local tribes of South Taranaki, Miss Hineao te Wetini, of the Ngati Tama-ahu-Roa (Oeo district) tribe cried their welcome in tribal fashion” (*The Hawera Star* 14 July 1938). It was further reported that the “Maoris in their cloaks added a picturesque touch to the scene” (*ibid.*). Also present were Campbell (now Mayor of Hāwera) and Houston. Interestingly, it was Houston, not Campbell, who was responsible for conducting the group over the site and telling its history, indicating his growing interest in the pā. This event appears to represent the first time, since the abandonment of the pā, that Māori had formally welcomed such a group on to the site.

A few months later the Minister of Public Works, Hon. R. Semple, whilst on a visit to Taranaki, was shown over Turuturu-mōkai. During the visit he stated, “This should be preserved as a national institution” (*The Hawera Star* 20 September 1938). He further expressed the view “that if the pa were restored to its full glory thousands of people would be attracted to Hawera to see it” (*ibid.*). On this occasion Campbell served as guide, pointing out the location of the ‘tunnel’, which greatly interested the minister.

It would appear that the Taranaki Māori Trust Board, at the invitation of the Hāwera Borough Council, visited Turuturu-mōkai in late 1938 to inspect the work in progress. It was the Trust Board who had sent Toka to the carving school at Rotorua. In a letter to the Hāwera Borough Council the Taranaki Māori Trust Board expressed their “appreciation of the Council’s action in regard to Turuturu-Mokai also the efforts of the Mayor and Mr Houston and the resultant and valuable carving now being carried out by Mr Henry Toka in strict conformity with Taranaki design and tradition” (Hāwera Borough Minute Book 21 November 1938).

In November 1938 it was announced that Toka was about to leave Hāwera to undertake training at Trentham Military Camp. This resulted in a cessation of the carving work he had been engaged in for the last eighteen months, which was to be an integral part of the restoration of Turuturu-mōkai. “With Mr Toka’s departure, the only master of the Maori carving art as it pertains to Taranaki, will be lost until such time as his return” (*The Daily News* 22 November 1938). Key factors in the work Toka was undertaking were that it was in the ‘Taranaki’ carving style and that he was the only person qualified to undertake the work. At the time, “large entrance gateway and panels have been completed as well as the majority of the panels and gable ends for the reproduction of a food storehouse” (*ibid.*). It was estimated that a further four months work remained to complete all the carving required. Toka appears never to have returned to complete the carvings, probably because of World War II, and in July 1949 “with the permission of the Council [Hāwera Borough] and members of the local Maori tribes” (Bromley 1981: 138) some of these were taken to Ketemarae and erected at the nearby Normanby Māori Mission.

However, the decision to transfer the carvings to Ketemarae did not sit easily with the Taranaki Māori Trust Board. In response to a letter from the Board, the Hāwera Borough Council Town Clerk, Mr J. Nielson, outlined the history behind the transfer of the carvings to Ketemarae:

For many years past, the carvings were stored in Nancarrow’s Bond, Grey Street, and later at the Borough Yards. From time to time certain enquiries were made as to what was to be done with the carvings, and various suggestions were made for their use.

In 1948 a letter was received from the Catholic Maori Mission, Normanby, requesting that the carvings be made available for erection on their property, this

being considered an appropriate setting, where they would be kept painted and cared for. (Letter to Taranaki Māori Trust Board from Neilson 14 November 1950)

Neilson explained that a Special Committee had been set up, with representatives from Taiporohēnui, Ketemarae, Fraser Road, and Ōhangai marae. The committee had met to discuss this matter (the Ōhangai marae representative was unable to attend) and had agreed for the carvings to go to Ketemarae. He therefore felt that the Hāwera Borough Council had acted in good faith on this matter.

The Taranaki Māori Trust Board responded with the following motion:

... that with a full appreciation of the fact that the Council had acted in good faith and that its action was prompted by a genuine desire to carry out the wishes of the Maori people, the Board however with all due respects to the Council's sincerity of purpose, regrets that since the carvings had not been applied to the purpose for which they were originally intended, it has no alternative by virtue of the original resolution passed in that behalf, but to respectfully ask the Council for the refund of its £50 contribution in respect of the said carvings (Letter to Neilson from Taranaki Māori Trust Board 27 November 1950).

The Hāwera Borough Council at its December 1950 meeting agreed to the return of the £50 to the Taranaki Māori Trust Board although because of "Audit Department rules that the refund must be made from 'unauthorised', it was decided to pay £25 this financial year and £25 next year" (Letter to Taranaki Māori Trust Board from Neilson 19 December 1950).

During World War II little progress was made on the reconstruction of Turuturu-mōkai. The main driver of the project, James Campbell, died on 11 August 1939 and less than a month later Great Britain declared war on Germany. In September 1939 the Hāwera Borough Council established a sub-committee to oversee the reserve. Its membership consisted of the Mayor, L. Clapham, Councillors Jones and Edmondston, John Houston and a representative from the Taranaki Māori Trust Board. Rod Syme was later added to the committee.

In his will James Campbell left £500 to Turuturu-mōkai:

To the Hawera Borough Council the sum of five hundred pounds (£500) to be applied by the said Council towards the re-erection of Turuturu-Mokai Redoubt [pā] on old time Maori lines stockades palisades and old time fortification, the reconstructed work to be marked with a tablet having a suitable inscription commemorating my wife Marion Campbell ... (Hāwera Borough Minute Book 20 November 1939).

Acknowledging this, councillors recorded their "appreciation of the outstanding services rendered by the late Mayor in bringing about a better understanding with the Maori people and improving their conditions, also in regard to the years of work devoted to Turuturu-Mokai and its development" (ibid.).

New Zealand celebrated the century since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1940. In 1939, the Hāwera Borough Council was asked to set aside an area of 1.2 hectares within the Turuturu-mōkai Reserve so that local school children could establish a Centenary Plantation. On 24 July 1940, children from nine south Taranaki schools planted 155 trees which they had grown. These plantings continued under the direction of Rod Syme and, by

1947, the number of trees planted by schools at the reserve had reached 2700.

No doubt bolstered by the success of this scheme, Rod Syme proposed further plantings occur around Turuturu-mōkai pā. Again, many of these were grown by local school children and their efforts were supplemented by specimens donated by horticultural groups and members of the public. From 1953 the reserve had regular Arbor Day events.

It was not until the early 1950s that Hāwera citizens again turned their attention to the pā under the leadership of Miss Jessie Buchanan and Mr G.W. Williams. Houston appears to have become increasingly involved with the project during this time.

A further development to enhance the reserve was the construction of a lake, kiosk, children's swimming pool (Fig. 4) and playground on the eastern side of the reserve. Under the direction of Messrs G.W. Williams, Rod Syme, J. Edmondston and John Houston, these facilities were officially opened on 5 March 1955 by E.B. Corbett, the Minister in Charge of Scenic Preservation. The lake was named Williams' Lake, while the adjacent bridge over the Tawhiti Stream was called James Winks Bridge, these being in honour of the contributions each of these two men had made to the project. The naming conventions of these facilities clearly signalled that this area was 'claimed' by Pākehā.

In February 1955, a joint agreement between the Hāwera Borough Council and the Hāwera County Council was signed for the management of the reserve. An estimated 3,000 people participated in the 'opening' of the Turuturu-mōkai reserve on 5 March 1955. The event was well covered by the press.

While thousands basked in the sun on the terraced earthworks below the ancient pa, hundreds cooled off in the new swimming pool, boated on Williams' Lake, watched national dancing competitions or listened to the two bands which were present. Almost every tree provided shade for a family party enjoying a picnic lunch.

During the official ceremony the Minister in Charge of Scenic Preservation, Mr E.B. Corbett, said that of all the similar projects he has seen throughout New Zealand, none could compare with Turuturu-Mokai as the result of local effort. It was a remarkable achievement made in a relatively short time by a group of public benefactors pooling together their generosity and vision as a team. (*The Hawera Star* 7 March 1955)

Other speakers at the event included Mr F.W. Finer, Mayor of Hāwera, and John Houston, who once again spoke of the history of the site. The cutting of the ribbon, on Winks Bridge, was performed by Miss Buchanan, after which Mr G.W. Williams spoke. While Mr Tamaka Awarau was part of the official party "representing the Maori race" (ibid.), he does not appear to have spoken although "musical interludes by a group of young Maori girls proved a popular feature" (ibid.).

The Taranaki Regional Committee of the National Historic Places Trust promoted the idea that the pou should feature on a postal stamp that would commemorate the centenary of the 1860s Taranaki Land Wars. Although the proposal was supported by the Chairman of the Philatelic Society, Herbert Mullan, who was also on the Taranaki Regional Committee, it did not gain support from the Trust in Wellington. The Trust felt that the "theme is not one favoured by the Trust, and in any case the date is too arbitrary as other Maori Wars preceded the Taranaki War" (HP 5/1/7 17 March 1958). Houston responded, "As a matter of fact, H.Q. rider to the effect that the Taranaki Wars were not the first in N.Z. is childish" (Houston to Insull 22 February 1958, Taranaki Regional Committee, NHPT).



Figure 4: Some of the estimated 3,000 people who participated in the gala event marking the re-development of the Turuturu-mōkai reserve on 5 March 1955. Newspaper photograph taken from *The Hawera Star* 9 March 1955.

At the request of the Hāwera Borough Council, Houston wrote a pamphlet entitled *Turuturu-mokai Historic Reserve near Hawera an historic survey*, which was published in 1958. It was divided into three sections: The Old Māori Fortress; The Pakehā Redoubt; and The Carved Post of Goodwill. The work brought together articles Houston had written in the 1930s and published in *The Hawera Star*. This pamphlet remains the standard history of Turuturu-mōkai.

While the 1950s had seen major developments, the 1960s were to be very different. The Hāwera Borough Council disbanded the Turuturu-Mōkai Committee in 1956. A new Turuturu-Mokai Control Committee was established in 1962, to which the Hāwera Borough Council contributed £700 and the Hāwera County Council £100. The committee was “faced with a big problem in the maintenance of extensive areas of lawn, shrubberies and shelter belts in addition to the buildings erected a few years previously” (Syme 1968). Further strain was placed on the limited funds available when, in 1964, the Borough Council agreed to take over from the County Council an area of land which had been created when Turuturu Road had been straightened, thereby creating an ‘island’. This had to be fenced, old trees and a boxthorn hedge removed and new plantings made. Following exceptionally heavy rain in July 1966, storm water run-off from Turuturu Road flooded the reserve and caused subsidence. The third major call on funds was the silting of the lake, which in turn caused

flooding to neighbouring properties and required additional drainage work to be undertaken. As part of this work, willows needed to be removed from the Tawhiti Stream.

Because of the increased costs, the Turuturu-Mokai Control Committee met with increased criticism from councillors, even though all projects undertaken by the Committee had first been approved by the Councillors themselves.

Turuturu-mōkai received another bequest from the S.G. Larcom Estate in 1964. At that time the Hāwera Borough Council and the Turuturu-Mōkai Control Committee “agreed that the bequest should not relieve the Council of its normal grant, that the capital should be reserved for special development projects, and that the interest could be used for maintenance in excess of the Borough and County grants” (ibid.). Some of the Larcom Bequest was used to construct a new entrance and sealed roadway to the reserve. The committee had plans to develop the interpretation of the reserve further, particularly Turuturu-mōkai pā, as there were “few in this country better preserved and more accessible” (ibid.).

However, in June 1968, the Hāwera Borough Council Finance Committee cast its eye on the Larcom Bequest as a source of funds for a proposed swimming pool project. Naturally, the Turuturu-Mōkai Control Committee would not agree to this, “notwithstanding the threat of the withdrawal of the Council’s annual maintenance grant” (ibid.). This then led to the Council discontinuing its \$1400 annual grant to the Turuturu-Mōkai Control Committee. One outcome of this was the resignation of Rod Syme, one of the reserve’s greatest supporters, from the Turuturu-Mōkai Control Committee.

A plaque commemorating the centennial of the engagement between Māori and Pākehā at Turuturumokai Redoubt was unveiled on 7 August 1968. In February 1970, the pā was the set for the filming by the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation of the ‘Killing of Kane’. A New Zealand Historic Places Trust sign interpreting Te Umu-a-Tongahake pā was unveiled on 30 September 1974.

In the mid 1980s, following on from the success of the *Te Māori* exhibition, the idea for a new National Māori Museum was floated. The editor of the *Taranaki Tourist Times*, Stewart Perry, seized upon the opportunity and put forward the idea that such a museum could be situated at Turuturu-mōkai in the area between the pā and the redoubt. Letters promoting this idea were sent to Koro Wetere, Minister of Māori Affairs, Venn Young, MP for Waitōtara, and Peter Tapsell, Minister of Internal Affairs. Tapsell, while expressing interest in the idea, very clearly indicated that the location of such a museum was to be in Wellington.

A visitor survey using two students and covering the period 14 January through to 8 February 1986, revealed that some 579 people visited Turuturu-mōkai and that the reserve had also been used for a private company function with 250 people attending. Visitor feedback revealed that more signage on how to get to the reserve was needed and interpretative signage actually on the reserve was required so that visitors knew what they were looking at. There was also some concern expressed at the vandalism that was occurring. The first Management Plan for the reserve was prepared in 1986 (Fig. 5).

In 1990, as New Zealand prepared to celebrate the 150th Anniversary since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, communities were invited to put forward projects which could tap into central government funding. A project was put forward by Nigel Ogle, founder of the nearby Tawhiti Museum and Clive Cullen, a Hāwera architect, that would see a revitalisation of the Turuturu-mōkai Reserve. The proposal was to redevelop the existing, but abandoned, kiosk into an interpretation centre containing displays and presentations detailing the history of the reserve. In order to curb growing concern surrounding the

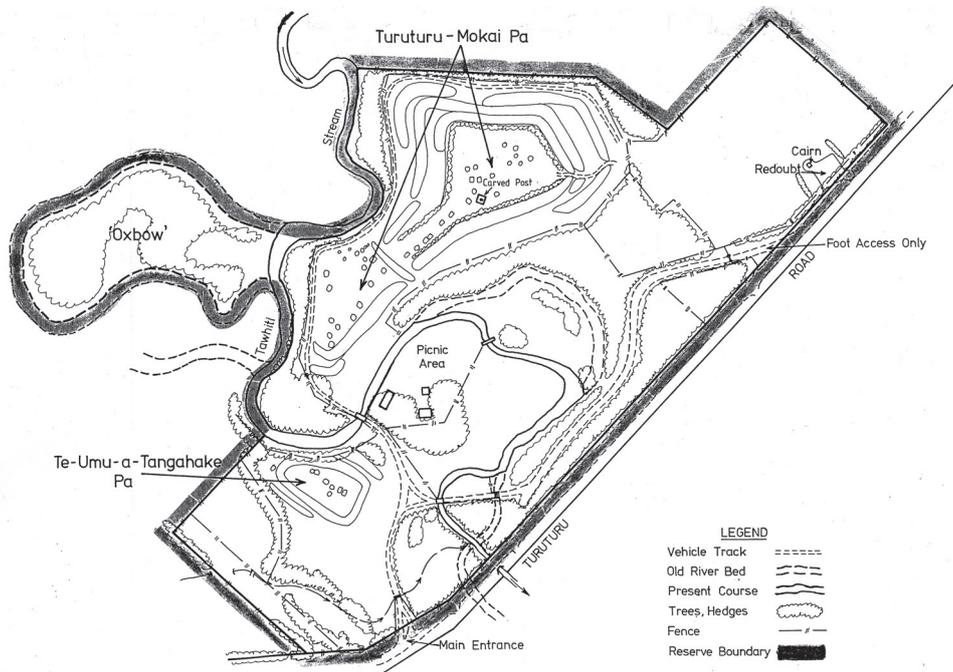


Figure 5: Plan showing the layout of the Turuturu-mōkai reserve taken from the Draft Management Plan.

increase in vandalism on the site, the project also proposed that a residence be shifted on to the reserve area adjacent to the entrance gates. This would allow a council employee to be responsible for opening and closing the gates, monitoring any maintenance required and reporting any instances of vandalism. The cost of the proposed project was \$93,500. The proposal received support from Taranaki Tourism, South Taranaki Community Arts Council, along with a number of prominent local citizens. However, Ngāti Tūpaea were not so enthusiastic about the proposal and were concerned that certain aspects of the history of Turuturu-mōkai were going to be sensationalised.

The Ngāti Ruanui Tahua Iwi Authority raised their concerns with the Hāwera District Council regarding the lack of consultation over the proposed project, especially given that the project had featured on radio. The Chairman, Spencer Carr, indicated that in principle the Authority was not against the proposed project but rather that the appropriate level of consultation had not taken place.

The response to the application, which was submitted by the Hāwera District Council to the 1990 Commission, was that the “amount of funding that could be realistically expected for a project in Turuturu Mokai, Hawera, was \$3000 to \$10,000” (*Taranaki Daily News* 12 May 1989). The Commission had expressed concern about the apparent lack of Māori input into the proposal and hence a low amount of money was likely to be offered. Even pared down, the project was still going to cost more than the money potentially on offer from the 1990 Commission and, as the Hāwera District Council had made no provision in their operating budget for the project, the proposal lapsed.

However, Turuturu-mōkai Reserve still remained an issue for many local residents. At a

meeting to discuss Hāwera District Council ratepayers' needs held in March 1992, a former Turuturu-mōkai sub-committee member, Frank Bourke, "complained about the unkept state of Turuturu Mokai Reserve, and said it was one of Hawera's few major tourist assets" (*Taranaki Daily News* 14 March 1992).

THE NGĀTI RUANUI SETTLEMENT

In 2001 the Crown formally settled Ngāti Ruanui's Waitangi claim. Part of the claim involved the transfer of several sites of significance and among these was Turuturu-mōkai Historic Reserve (subject to the protection of the memorial cairn and public access to this).

In order for Turuturu-mōkai to be part of the Crown's settlement package the South Taranaki District Council (STDC) first had to revoke its title to the land, which would allow it to return to Crown ownership. Ngāti Tūpaea hapū were strongly opposed to this and, since 1996, had been negotiating with STDC for the reserve to be returned directly to them as they held mana whenua. During the later part of 1999 the issue was vigorously debated between Ngāti Tūpaea, Ngāti Ruanui and South Taranaki District Council. Ngāti Tūpaea spokesman Huirangi Waikerepuru stated that by transferring the reserve to Ngāti Ruanui an injustice would be done. "It would be another raupatu (confiscation) on top of others" (*Taranaki Daily News* 29 September 1999). Waikerepuru requested that South Taranaki District Council allow more time before making a decision. In order to reinforce their claim to Turuturu-mōkai, a number of Ngāti Tūpaea members began camping on the reserve.

Another occupation of the reserve occurred in April 2002 when about "20 people, many from Ngāti Tupaea [Tupaea] hapu, ... [camped] at the reserve kiosk" (*Taranaki Daily News* 9 April 2002). Such action was clearly designed to force the issue of who had ownership rights to the reserve back on to the negotiation table. At this time, many visitors to the reserve felt uncomfortable and that they were not welcome to visit the reserve. However, it was reported that "the gates of the reserve remained open to the public and people should not be put off by the protest signs painted on the outside of the makeshift awning" (*ibid.*). As 2007 draws to a close, Ngāti Ruanui are in the process of working with Ngāti Tūpaea to settle the issue and Turuturu-mōkai is set to enter a new phase in its history.

DISCUSSION

Turuturu-mōkai pā has, since its construction, taken on a number of roles. Obviously, its primary function was to provide a defensive structure for hapū, something which it proved it was unable to achieve. It then lay abandoned, a highly tapu place because of the blood which had been spilt upon it. However, the pā and the memory of what had happened would still have been kept alive by descendants of those with connections to it.

The Taranaki Land Wars of the 1860s saw numerous engagements between Māori and European soldiers. One of the more significant engagements, in July 1868, took place at Turuturumōkai Redoubt, just north of the ancient earthworks of the pā from which the name of the redoubt had been taken.

By the late 1890s the pā was considered to be worthy of preservation and, as such, obtained reserve status in 1905. This was achieved through the actions of a few Pākehā who felt that such sites needed protection.

The 1930s saw a number of schemes developed to provide work for the unemployed. The reconstruction of Turuturu-mōkai pā was one of these and was a project that was to extend beyond the Depression years.

Unfortunately, there are no known plans or detailed photographs depicting the site prior to the reconstruction. This makes it difficult to determine what impact the work carried out had on the original layout and archaeology of the site. Possibly the closest we have describing the pā pre-reconstruction is a piece written by Houston in August 1931:

On all sides of Turuturu-Mokai Pa was a triple line of deep trenches, each with a massive rampart behind it surmounted by a stockade. In order to economise space, some of the food storage pits, rua kumara, were placed in the trenches. A very interesting feature of the pa is at the south-western end, where the trenches follow and include a low spur nestling into a bend of the Tawhiti stream. At this part there was a sub-division of the pa, for only two lines of trenches and ramparts enclose the spur, while the third or innermost trench and rampart do not enclose the spur. In the area so divided from the main pa are a large number of rua kumara, many of these being of considerable size. Some of these ruas communicated with each other by tunnels or holes cut through the intervening earth, as may still be seen. (*The Hawera Star* 8 August 1931)

In another article, Houston refers to “the presence of taku-ahi, stone hearths used as cooking places” on the pā (*The Hawera Star* 6 February 1932).

Prickett warns visitors to the pā that, “We can only assume they [the unemployed] followed the shape of the original defences” (Prickett 1990: 29). Campbell did offer some comfort that this was the case when he explained to the Bledisloes that “in reconstructing the pa the workmen had adhered as closely as possible to the original contour” (*The Hawera Star* 11 December 1931). Not only were the ditches and banks worked on but also “ancient Maori ovens ... had been unearthed and the consolidated ash of the fires” (ibid.). Presumably the well-defined rectangular pits that are seen today have been subjected to the same treatment and there is little evidence of the rua kumara or bell-shaped pits to which Houston refers (see above). Certainly rectangular pits are found on other sites in south Taranaki. Such structures would be easy to ‘dig out’, unlike the rua kumara, which the workers would not have been able to reconstruct because of their shape. It is not known if any artefacts were uncovered during the course of this work. However, it would be safe to assume that some were.

Reviewing the history of Turuturu-mōkai has revealed that from the late 1890s the site was being suggested as a tourist attraction and, as such, needed to be preserved and protected. However, the European redoubt site was being promoted many years before the pā was, appearing in tourist guidebooks as early as 1898 (Anonymous 1898). It appeared again in Lawson (1919). It was not until the 1930s that the pā itself began to be promoted, as in the popular Bradbury (1933) series. One guide book noted that it was “one of the most interesting spots in South Taranaki” and that men “have cleared out the blocked fossae and restored the fallen walls and escarpments” (Anonymous 1937: 38). Certainly, from the 1950s Turuturu-mōkai featured in the tourist literature (see Anonymous 1957). The lack of commercial imagery pertaining to the site, particularly postcards, is interesting. Other Hāwera attractions, such as the Water Tower, Naumai Park and King Edward Park, are well covered in this respect. One possible explanation is that the development of Turuturu-mōkai occurred largely after the postcard era.

Turuturu-mōkai has, for a large part of the twentieth century, been the focus of enormous Pākehā pride and attention, to the extent that Māori interests in the site appear to have been largely subsumed. ‘Ownership’ of the pā and its immediate environs was on Pākehā terms. Campbell and Houston appear to have genuinely wanted Māori involvement in the reconstruction project but it was, at the end of the day, a Pākehā driven initiative. Campbell’s vision of a fully fortified pre-European pā, based on the earthworks of Turuturu-mōkai, was certainly ambitious but that vision died with him. There was no one else with the drive or energy to continue it and the fact that World War II also occurred at this time meant that people’s attention was elsewhere.

It is also worth noting that Campbell felt that the reconstruction should result in the pā strongly conforming to “West Coast ideals and tradition” (Letter to Taranaki Māori Trust Board from Campbell 3 December 1936). The most obvious way for this to happen was in the carvings and using known examples, largely from the north Taranaki region, carving expert Henare Toka was able to work in the appropriate style rather than in a more generic one.

For many decades the reserve was a focal point for visitors to the area and was shown off with pride by local residents. Many in the community felt a strong ownership and connection to it through being involved with the reserve’s beautification, particularly school children who undertook plantings there each year. The number of bequests that were received specifically for Turuturu-mōkai was another indication of the level of community interest in it. Within the wider Taranaki community no other archaeological site has received so much attention or investment.

This perceived sense of loss as the result of the Waitangi Tribunal process has occurred elsewhere. The other notable Taranaki example is when Ngāti Tama, in north Taranaki, were given back, unencumbered, Pukearuhe Historic Reserve. Originally a major pā, it was later a colonial military outpost, and the site of the so-called Whiteley Massacre in February 1869. A stone monument was erected in 1923 to commemorate this event. In recent years, some Ngāti Tama made it known that they found the presence of this monument on this important site inappropriate and that they wanted it removed. This ignited community passion from both sides of the debate and since its removal in 2006, a new monument has been erected on private land adjacent to the former reserve.

It is understandable that many locals feel upset with the return of the reserve to Ngāti Ruanui, and ultimately to Ngāti Tūpaea, as they perceive this to mean that this much loved reserve will not be available to visit and enjoy. Such concerns are probably premature. Those with mana whenua now need to be given an opportunity to reclaim this important site and, in so doing, determine what happens to it. The site will enter a new phase in its very colourful history.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Keith Holswich, New Plymouth, for alerting me to the original maps and plans for the Turuturu-mōkai Reserve; staff at the *South Taranaki Star* for access to back issues of the *Hawera Star*; South Taranaki District Council for access to their Turuturu-mōkai file and Christine Whybrew and Ruth Harvey for commenting on an earlier draft.

REFERENCES

- Anonymous 1898. *Tours & New Zealand Excursions Taranaki*. Publisher unknown.
- Anonymous 1937. *Visitors' Guide to Taranaki*. Taranaki Daily News, New Plymouth.
- Anonymous 1957. *Taranaki Tourist Guide*. Taranaki Daily News, New Plymouth.
- Best, E. 1975. *The Pa Maori*. Government Printer, Wellington. 2nd edition.
- Bradbury, E. (ed.) 1933. *The Settlement and Development of Taranaki, New Zealand*. E. Bradbury and Co., Auckland.
- Bromley, A.P.C. 1981. *Hawera District Centenary*. Hāwera District Council, New Plymouth.
- Cowan, J. 1983. *The New Zealand Wars*. Government Printer, Wellington. 2 vols.
- Hāwera District Council 1986. *Draft Management Plan for Turuturu Mokai Historic Reserve*.
- Houston, J. 1958. *Turuturu-Mokai Historic Reserve Near Hawera*, Hāwera Star Print, Hāwera.
- Lawson, W. 1919. *Mount Egmont and the Gardens of Taranaki*. Wellington Publishing Company, Wellington.
- Prickett, N. 1990. *Historic Taranaki. An Archaeological Guide*. GP Books, Wellington.
- Smith, S.P. 1910. *History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast North Island of New Zealand Prior to 1840*. Thomas Avery, New Plymouth.
- Sole, T. 2005. *Ngāti Ruanui. A History*. Huia Publishing, Wellington.
- Newspapers and unpublished sources
- Daily News, Taranaki Herald, The Hawera and Normanby Star, The Hawera Star*
- Hāwera Borough Council Minute Books, South Taranaki District Council Archives.
- Skinner, W.H. Diaries (MS021, Puke Ariki).
- Syme, R. 1968. 'Turuturu-Mokai Historic Reserve', South Taranaki District Council Archives.
- Taranaki Branch Committee Correspondence, New Zealand Historic Places Trust.
- Turuturu-Mokai Submissions, Puke Ariki.
- Received 1 February 2008*
Accepted 25 March 2008