



## Heaphy Track reopening

Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō whānau and kaimahi came from across Te Taihū to join the community in Karamea, for the reopening of the Heaphy Track on Thursday 19 October 2023.

The iconic 82-kilometre track has been closed since February 2022 when Cyclone Dovi caused severe damage to one of the swing bridges on the track. The Heaphy Track is a place of profound cultural significance for our iwi. Not only have we had settlements in the region but our tipuna have a long and unbroken history across the West Coast.

The day started with a blessing by Ngāti Waewae at the newly constructed swing bridge. Helicopters flew up to the site of the new bridge to begin the proceedings. A cutting of the ribbon ceremony was held at the track's entrance at Kohaihai later in the morning. Students from the local kura planted native trees to commemorate the occasion. The Department of Conservation then held an information session where they went into detail about the construction of the new bridge.

Continued on page 3

## *Kia hiwa rā* NEWS AND EVENTS

### INSIDE:

Chairperson's Report

Upcoming event

Kaumātua Christmas koha

Kaumātua afternoon tea in Blenheim

Keeping you informed of news, announcements and opportunities, from around our rohe and the motu.



# FROM THE CHAIR

Tēnā tātau e te whānau

The hearing for the Nelson Tenths Case (also known as the Wakatū Case and the Stafford Case, after the plaintiff Matua Rore Pat Stafford), has now concluded following 10 weeks of trial. Great thanks are extended to Mr Mark Moses (Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō, Ngāti Kuia, Rangitāne o Wairau) and Dr Peter Meihana (Rangitāne o Wairau, Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō) as well as our legal representatives and Trustees who worked determinedly on this kaupapa.

As a reminder, Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Trust intervened in this long-standing case to ensure that if there is an award to the customary owners as a result of the hearing, those customary owners include Kurahaupō iwi tipuna (and their descendants), who were wrongly excluded from the Nelson Tenths scheme. It is important to reiterate that Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Trust does not have any material interest in this case other than to support the descendants of Kurahaupō customary owners by funding legal counsel. The trial has been described as one of the largest pieces of litigation against the Crown this country has seen.

We now must wait for the judge to consider all the evidence and submissions. This is expected to take quite some time, with the earliest signal of a decision

in the first part of 2024, but it could be as late as June next year. A resolution to this matter is expected to have enormous economic, social, and cultural benefits in the Nelson region and beyond.

I would also like to acknowledge the recently completed biennial national primary schools kapa haka competition Te Mana Kuratahi. This spectacular event involved 45 kapa haka teams from across Aotearoa who battled it out for top honours during the four-day competition. Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Trust provided important cultural support leading up to and across the event, including working behind the scenes and providing important manaaki for visiting rōpū. Congratulations are extended to Te Kapa Puāwai from Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) who were crowned the winners of Te Mana Kuratahi 2023.

He waka eke noa e whānau,

Ka nui ngā mihi,  
**Hinemoa Conner**  
Chairperson



Continued from page 1

Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Trusts Chairperson Hinemoa Conner attended the reopening and spoke about why this kaupapa was so significant to Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō.

“This area holds a great deal of significance to Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō. Our tīpuna Kehu famously guided Charles Heaphy and Thomas Brunner on their surveying expedition of Te Taihu, including showing both men what would inevitably become the Heaphy Track.”

Originally known as Kehu’s Track, it formed an extremely important and well-used highway that connected Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō settlements in Te Tai Aorere (Tasman), Mohua (Golden Bay), Te Taitapu and Kawatiri (Buller). Our tīpuna also used the track to gain access to limestone caves used as urupā, which remain tapu today.

Hinemoa also added how significant this track is to the local community in Karamea and beyond.

“The Heaphy Track is one of the biggest drivers of the West Coast’s economy. It draws in a significant amount of tourists year-round. Its closure has had a massive impact on this community. It’s fantastic to see it up and running again.”

Darren Ngaru King, General Manager for Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Trust, acknowledged all of the hard work that went on behind the scenes to reopen the track. He also acknowledged the whānau who attended the reopening.

“The attendance of Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō whānau and Trustees at the reopening ceremony affirms not only our shared interests in the area but also the significance of the reopening of the track for communities along the coast.”



## Upcoming event



**What?** Mana Rangatahi

**When?** Monday 11 to Friday 16 December 2023

**Where?** Onetahua Marae in Mohua (Golden Bay)

**Who?** Registered rangatahi age 13 – 18

Register via our website

Save the dates!



## Kaumātua Christmas koha

Earlier in the year the Trust Board voted to change the age of kaumātua from 65 to 60.

The trust will be offering a Christmas koha for all our kaumātua.

If you haven’t already, please send us your bank details. You can screenshot the top of your bank statement showing your name and full bank account number on the same page.

If you are unsure if we have your details, please call or email the office to check.

You can forward your bank details to [lynne.owen@ngatiapakiterato.iwi.nz](mailto:lynne.owen@ngatiapakiterato.iwi.nz).

# Kaumātua afternoon tea in Blenheim

We recently held our annual kaumātua afternoon tea in Wairau at the Vines Café. It was great to see so many whānau in attendance connecting with one another. Check out the pictures from the afternoon!

