

## **The Unveiling Ceremony**

*(A report of the unveiling of the Bruntwood Rd sign board memorializing Wiremu Tamehana from the Tamahere Cryer, May 1991)*

**Saturday, April 20 [1991], a pleasant autumn morning on a quiet roadside seemed far removed from events 125 years ago.**

Two large groups of people gathered to commemorate the covenant of peace between Wiremu Tamehana and Brigadier General George. J. Carey [in 1865] – the tangata whenua [people of the land] and the manuhiri (visitors).

The importance placed on the event was evident in the large representation of people from all Ngati Haua marae – Raungaiti (Waharoa), Rukumoana (Morrinsville), Ka a-te mata (Morrinsville), Hukanui (Gordonton), Te Iti O Haua (Tauwhare), Waimakariri (Hill Rd), Tainui, Whare Korokia [House of Prayer] Marychurch Rd.

Following the calling of the Kuia, the Manuhiri walked forward as if on to a marae. Ruberl Rapana, Kaumatua of Te iti o Haua, the nearest marae to the site was the first speaker on behalf of Ngati Haua. Other Ngati Haua elders also spoke. The officiating Minister was the Reverend Werewere Maaka for the ceremony.

Visitors included the Maori Queen's representative and elders from other tribes, as well as members of the Historic Places Trust. The wording on the notice board was read out by the Rev Maaka and the English version by a grand-daughter of William Australia Graham, who was a friend of Wiremu Tamehana, [acted as interpreter between Tamehana and Carey] and became an MP.

Tamehana's weapons – 2 patu pounamu (one of which was from his father Te Waharoa) and his taiaha were displayed at the site of the unveiling.

Participants were invited back to Waimakariri marae at the intersection of Hill Rd and Victoria Rd for further speeches and a meal.

It was a moving ceremony, symbolising a renewal of harmony between two cultures. The notice board in Bruntwood Rd is worth a visit, to reflect on the history of this area, which is of such importance to the tangata whenua.

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