

MUSEUM AND CHURCH CEREMONIES

An official opening and the laying of foundation stones

Tomorrow the Minister of Maori Affairs, Mr. Hanan, will represent the State at civic and religious ceremonies in New Plymouth almost parallel with those held on December 9, 1897, when the Governor of New Zealand, the Earl of Ranfurly, was the principal guest.

Mr. Hanan will open the new Taranaki Museum and then lay the historic Whiteley Stone at the new \$57,000 Whiteley Methodist Memorial Church. The foundation stone itself will be laid by the Rev. W. H. Greenlade, in 1897 Lord Ranfurly laid the foundation stone of the old Whiteley Church, which was destroyed by fire in February, 1950, and on the same day, he opened the New Plymouth Exhibition in the Alexandra Hall.

Tomorrow's events are linked by other historical associations. The Whiteley Memorial Church commemorates the Rev. John Whiteley, a pioneer missionary among the Maoris. And the Maori people themselves have long shown a close interest in the Taranaki museum, which holds many of their valuable gifts.

Sturdy champion of Maoris' rights

THE Rev. John Whiteley came to New Zealand in 1833 and was killed at White Cliffs, Pukearahu, on February 13, 1869, but his fame amongst the Maoris continued to grow long after his death, for they recognised in him a sturdy champion of their rights and at the same time a gentle preacher of the Gospel.

It is not believed the Maoris intended to kill Whiteley. He was the victim of their determination to shoot on sight any man who would try to thwart them in their plan to destroy the military stockades and their occupants at Pukearahu.

Such was the mana of Whiteley among the Maoris along the west coast of the island that when it was realised it was he who had been killed the natives of both opposing forces were overwhelmed with grief.

At his headquarters at Awahione the old chief, Wakani, when he heard the news, sat silent with shame and grief, in which he was joined by his followers.



THE REV. JOHN WHITELEY, Taranaki's pioneer Methodist missionary, after whom the new church is named. (Taranaki Museum, photo.)

Lower. They at once returned to his decisions were never questioned. Such was his influence and power the memorable words which ended the fighting between the two races. Here let it end, for the death of Whiteley is more than the death of many men.

As a minister of the Methodist or Wesleyan Church, as it was known then, the Rev. John Whiteley dedicated his life to the uplifting of the Maoris. And he found time as well to help in the attempts to unravel the confusion arising from the disputes over the land deals between the natives, the New Zealand Company and the Crown.

He was born in 1806 and at the age of 26 was ordained to the full ministry of his church in Lambeth Chapel, London, on September 27, 1832. He sailed for New Zealand on November 5, 1833.

He travelled tirelessly from his British soldier's encampments to Maori pa and was received everywhere with love and esteem. He would ride from his home in



THE SCENE in December 1897 when the Earl of Ranfurly, Governor of New Zealand, opened the new Whiteley Memorial Church, which was destroyed by fire in February, 1950.



THE HISTORIC DAY in 1927 when the famous Tokomaru anchor stone (shown at extreme left of the front row) and the great adze Poutama Whiria (held by Mr. Kapunga McClutchie, ruling chief of the Ngati Mutunga) came into the safe keeping of the Taranaki Museum. The three trustees of the anchor and adze were Mr. McClutchie, Mr. Rangai Watson, elder of the Atiawa (in front row next to Mr. McClutchie) and Mr. Noho Marangi To Whiti, son of the famous Maori prophet (second from left in back row).

Relics date back to first Maori

SIR PETER BUCK, Sir Maui Pomare, Mr. W. H. Skinner and Mr. Percy Smith all played a part in bringing to the Taranaki Museum the historic pear-shaped anchor claimed to have been the anchor of the original Maori canoe Tokomaru and the famous stone adze Poutama Whiria, which is claimed to be the only authentic relic in New Zealand brought with the first Maoris on their migration.

These relics of an ancient civilisation came into the hands of the Taranaki Museum in 1927 when leaders of the three Maori tribes, Kapunga McClutchie, ruling chief of the Ngati Mutunga, Rangai Watson, elder of the Atiawa, and Noho Marangi To Whiti, the son of the famous Te Whiti of Pungahuhua, trustees of the anchor, and the adze, handed them to Mr. Skinner, then chairman of the museum committee.

It was an historic occasion, for there had been continual disputes among the Maori of Taranaki as to the ownership of the relics. Not only did tribes dispute ownership, but sub-tribes too with one another in claiming possession.

Sir Peter Buck's visit to his old tribe at Okaiti early in 1927, long before he directed the Ebbw Vale Museum in Monmouth, revived the question of ownership. He was merely Dr. Buck, but his word carried great weight. He had the support too of Sir Maui Pomare,

equal dignity, Mr. Skinner, a great friend of the Maori people at a time when there was no integration and trust which exist today, the museum authorities readily agreed to the appointment of one representative of each of the three tribes as co-trustees with the museum authorities.

The Tokomaru Whiria is said to have been lost for 400 years. A beautifully polished black stone adze with a blade nearly four inches wide was found at Pukearahu in 1921 by a European resident.

When he found the adze, Maori elders, so it is said, could give a minute description of it, a hand-drawn sketch of it was originally lost, or more probably hidden from the world.

The Tokomaru Whiria says that the canoe in which Maori sailed north from Tahiti reached New Zealand in the Maori canoes, and placed it in the museum so that it could be seen by Maori and pakeha alike. The petition is in the adze.

The Maori attitude was expressed by Buck in these words: "I should have liked to secure the two exhibits for Auckland, but they naturally resting place in the district in which the descendants of their original owners reside."

In September 1927 the Maori elders assembled in the old museum building in Monmouth, where they discussed the matter in the presence of the trustees. The trustees, after the people's consent to the treasures being placed in the museum.

Behind the scenes these men and Mr. A. C. Cooke, a former Mayor, were the moving spirits and persuaded the Provincial Council, Mr. Andrew Carruthers to make a free grant of £2500 to establish a public library, on condition that the council found a suitable site and gave a small amount of annual subsidy.

While the library project succeeded, the museum, which dated from 1897, was in a state of neglect. The Carnegie Library was opened, was left in the old town hall, originally the Provincial Council Chambers, and few people bothered about it.

In 1911 Mr. Skinner's collection of valuable books established the early collection, now one of the most important parts of the library and museum.

NOTABLE GUESTS

Notable guests are coming from all parts of New Zealand for tomorrow's official opening of the new Taranaki Museum by the Minister of Maori Affairs, Mr. Hanan.

They include the following museum directors: Dr. R. A. Pake (Dominion Museum, Wellington), Dr. Gilbert Archer (Auckland), Mr. D. Hooper, botanist at the Auckland Museum, Mr. Ross McDonald (Wanganui) and Mr. J. S. H. Munro (Hawke's Bay).

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Fine display in the new museum

WHILE it may not contain the quantity of Maori artifacts found in some of New Zealand's leading museums, the new Taranaki Museum has a collection which is regarded as of superlative quality.

Two thirds of the floor space in the new museum is devoted to the display of Maori artifacts, separated from the early colonialist section by a row of connected cases which house the birds imported by the swains and shores of Taranaki. It is attractively arranged.

The main entrance pillars strikingly illustrate the association of Maori and pakeha in the development of Taranaki. On the right-hand pillar is the first great seal used by the Taranaki Provincial Government on its establishment in 1853, with the gavel used by the first speaker.

Immediately opposite is the operated stone adze, Poutama Whiria, claimed by the Maori people to have been brought to New Zealand shores by the famous Tokomaru Canoe in 1350. The main theme in the display of Maori artifacts on the other wall is the craftsmanship of the Polynesian people — their ornaments, fishing gear, furnishings, carving, agricultural implements, weapons of war, mats and cloaks, textiles, sea foods and cooking methods.

The most important items in the Maori section are the stone tool wood carvings found in recent years in the swamp areas around the coast.

Unique in New Zealand are the stone carvings and the standing floor cases. They are the work of early Taranaki Maori. Indeed, no phase of ancient Maori life has been left untouched in the splendid exhibition.

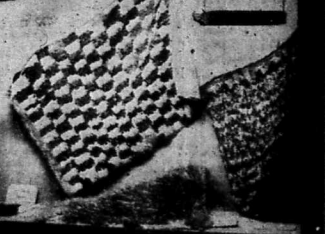
Some of the movable glass-covered show cases are devoted to specific purposes — tattooing, including some original drawings of great value, beautifully carved boxes in which the old Maori kept their ceremonial feathers, and extremely rare Maori greenstone ornaments.

Beneath the main counter glassed-in enclosures hold fine examples of the small messenger ships the Raheva and the Gairu, which were wrecked at Pungahuhua and Onongu and provided the main link with the north before the construction of the railway line.

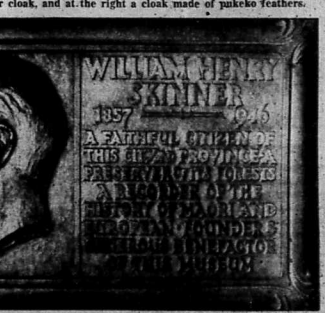
In one of the display cases in the same stand is the jeweled sword of General Cameron, lost on the opening by Mr. E. K. Cameron, of Invercargill.

The layout differs entirely from that of the old Taranaki Museum. It is modern in every way, easy to inspect and, as Mr. Allan says, intended to tell the world the story of Taranaki. The Museum had adapted as its motto the Maori saying "Ware Kahu-ka-ka," the free translation of which means "the treasure house where the treasures are."

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAORI CULTURE and customs is illustrated in show cases on the north wall of the new Taranaki Museum. Each display represents a different aspect of Maori life in Taranaki.



MAORI CLOAKS form an important part of the Taranaki Museum's collection. In the centre is the valuable cloak given to S. Percy Smith, of New Plymouth, who later became Surveyor-General. By the natives of the Urewera in appreciation of his services on a Royal Commission dealing with their grievances the cloak is a beautiful light feather cloak, and at the right a cloak made of pukete feathers.



THIS PLAQUE, placed near the main entrance to the Taranaki Museum, recalls the outstanding contribution made to the museum by the late Mr. W. H. Skinner, one of the founders and donor of a valuable collection of Maori artifacts. The plaque will be unveiled tomorrow by the Minister of Maori Affairs, Mr. Hanan.

Province's debt to Skinner family

NEW PLYMOUTH, and Taranaki, owe a great debt to the late Mr. W. H. Skinner, whose valuable collection of early New Zealand books and Maori artifacts, with the addition of those of his son, Dr. H. D. Skinner, formed the nucleus of the old Taranaki Museum. Without the persistence Mr Skinner displayed, from 1911 till a museum was properly established in 1920, some of the most valuable possessions of historic and national importance could have been lost.

It was Mr. Skinner, with the late Messrs Percy White and E. Kenny, had to put up a sterling battle, as members of the New Plymouth library committee, to secure the necessary funds to purchase the books and artifacts. Successive borrowings which the library itself should be self-supporting.

Behind the scenes these men and Mr. A. C. Cooke, a former Mayor, were the moving spirits and persuaded the Provincial Council, Mr. Andrew Carruthers to make a free grant of £2500 to establish a public library, on condition that the council found a suitable site and gave a small amount of annual subsidy.

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