



Kopututanga Taonga o Te Wairoa
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15th December 2014.

Shona Sinclair - Curator,
Hawick Museum, Wilton Lodge Park,
Hawick, Roxburgshire,
TD9 7JL,
Scotland, United Kingdom.

Dear Shona.

Wairoa Museum wishes to support the efforts of Dr. Mere Whaanga, Mr. Pita Walker-Robinson and Mr. Nigel How in their quest to seek the return of a Maori flag to New Zealand. It is their intention that, if the flag is returned, it will be donated to Wairoa Museum. Letters of explanation have been written by these three people and are attached to this covering letter.

We understand that the flag in question was donated to Hawick Museum in 1921. Research has shown that the flag was captured during the New Zealand Wars on Christmas Day 1865 in a battle at Omaruhakeke, some 20 kilometres from Wairoa township. Involved in the battle were noted local Maori leaders Ihaka Whaanga, Pitiera Kopu and Te Waru Tamatea – the latter being a Paimarire (Hauhau) adherent at the time and the former mentioned two leaders being Crown loyalists.

Both Dr. Mere Whaanga and Mr. Pita Walker-Robinson are descendants of Ihaka Whaanga. Mr. Nigel How is a relative of the Hauhau people from who the flag was captured.

The Wairoa District is currently in a process of settling historical grievances between the Crown and local Maori. Wairoa Museum is about to undertake an internal redevelopment of our displays and, if repatriation is agreed to, the flag has the potential to become a powerful symbol in the resolution of these historical grievances between the Crown and local Maori (both Maori 'loyalists' and Maori 'rebels'). The flag would considerably strengthen the local content of our NZ War collection.

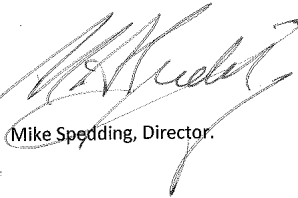
We wish to ask the following preliminary questions:

1. Is the Hawick Museum of a mind to consider the repatriation of the flag to New Zealand?
2. If so, what is the appropriate procedure to follow?

Wairoa Museum is situated in the township of Wairoa, which is located in the northern Hawke's Bay region of the North Island of New Zealand. Wairoa Museum was established in 1975; is administered by a Trust Board; currently employs three staff; and has storage and display areas with appropriate supports and controls as found in much larger museums.

Thank you for giving this matter your consideration.

Yours faithfully,



Mike Spedding, Director.

10/1
4th April Reply