

NGATI-TAMA WANANGA.

The Wananga (learning-time) organized by the Matua Whangai committee of Ngati-Tama was judged an outstanding success by all who attended it from throughout the North Island. It began at Urenui Pa on Friday 15th January 1988 with a "settling in" period, where people young and old greeted and got to know each other. Ngati-Tama Tee-shirts and caps were available to all at a minimal cost. Saturday was taken up with a bus trip to the Northernmost part of the tribal land (Mokau), where points of interest were explained by the kaumatua ably assisted by two local identities well versed in the history of this area. (Noted historian Dr. Alister Buist and Mr. Ray Watemburg) Sites of old Pa and waahi-tapu were pointed out as were fishing spots, both fruitful and dangerous, as well as the spot where the Tribe's canoe, Tokomaru landed. A barbecue meal was shared beside the Mokau river.

Back at Urenui Pa, after the night's meal, an evening of speaking, questions and answers, the learning of waiata, (one specially composed for Ngati-Tama) took place.

Sunday morning saw the iwi travel to the Southernmost Pa site of Ngati-Tama, that of Titoki Pa in Pukearuhe, beside the Papatiki Stream. Then on to a family urupa (cemetery) where several chiefs of Ngati-Tama are buried.

A church service was held. Two native trees donated by a kaumatua were planted in commemoration of the weekend, by two of the youngest grandsons present. (Stephen White Jnr. & Benjamin White). Questions were asked and answered as people showed hunger for information of their forebears and the history of the area. After a picnic lunch at Pukearuhe Beach where younger members made acquaintance for the first time with our Taniwha, some walked to Waipingau while others just sat and reminisced about earlier days and their lives in the area. Age groups present were..under 20 years..40%
20-40yrs..35% Over 40 yrs..25%

Parents brought their children from Auckland Hamilton Rotorua Mokau Pukearuhe Waitara New Plymouth Hawera Wanganui Porirua and Wellington..about 150 altogether. Now that the "getting acquainted" period is over, the next Wananga will gradually