

## Te Rongopai Marae Update



*Hoki atu whakahaungia te Rongopai, i runga I te Ngawari me te aroha  
Te Kooti Rikirangi*

Kia ora e te Whānau O Wi Pere,

Firstly, our aroha goes out to our whānau who have grieved the loss of their loved ones during this year. It has not been easy, especially with mandatory COVID-19 restrictions.

My name is Tom Witana. I am a Marae trustee who has volunteered with Martin Baker to present an overview of our Marae rejuvenation report for our Stage 1 project.

*To revive the old with the new, and the new with the old*

We, the Te Rongopai Marae Trust Board, concluded that our strategic pathway had to be a capital build over a remedial or cosmetic approach. This would in turn aim to address the structural integrity and health and safety of our Marae, for the benefit of our present and future generations to come.

In the previous pānui, we had outlined what work was required in our stage 1 phase. We are pleased to announce that we are on the brink of completion, with the target conclusion date being the end of November 2021.

Stage 1 has been an enormous undertaking, with several projects running simultaneously and with extra funding being targeted towards our infrastructure.

Our timeframes were extended, and with the scale of the project involved, you do your very best to keep your finger on the pulse, but also you cannot predict different unforeseen events that come up. Adverse weather conditions, the COVID-19 lockdown in August, price increases and the supply and demand for materials caused further disruptions, ultimately resulting in contractors getting behind in completing their jobs.

There are always variations and constraints in any project, and our focus is to problem solve and keep on progressing forward. This is where our Project Manager James Blackburne (Director, Architects 44 Ltd) and his team have been a great asset in the operation and consistency of our project.

### **Kaumatua Housing**

To ensure kaumatua flats are part of the bigger picture for Rongopai Marae whānau now and into the future, the Marae committee confirmed through their 2019 - 2021 strategic planning that they would be taking steps towards prioritising the development of kaumatua papakainga housing.

The initiative is an investment in the health, well-being, and care of our kaumatua - encouraging both kaumatua and their families to return to their papakainga. This will have the added benefit of enhancing the future growth and development for the Wi Pere whānau and all our other inter-related wider whānau, keeping our community lively and well.

This concept is close to the hearts of the Marae Trustees and whānau who have raised this matter in past Annual General Meeting hui. We would like to let our Wi Pere Trustees and whānau know that we are working on this initiative simultaneously with the current Marae rejuvenation project. We will share the draft plan with whānau and would happily welcome and receive your ideas and input.

If you have any further enquiries, then please email **J Ihimaera, at the following email address: rmt473@gmail.com.**

### **Whānau participation**

We have our Facebook page 'Te Rongopai Marae', which is updated with photos on all the latest developments to date.

We also encourage whānau to come along to our committee hui held every second Sunday of the month, at the Blind Foundation Building, 39 Grey Street Gisborne, 9.30 am - 12.30 pm. These meetings are always advertised on our Facebook page. If you are not a member, then please just log in (This is a private group).

To conclude, we want to extend our thanks to the following whether they have contributed on a monetary basis or provided koha on behalf of our Marae:

- Wi Pere Trust Board - for your contribution towards our feasibility report that enabled us to get to where we are today. This also includes the continual payment of our insurance policy and your frequent support.
- T & J Meredith and whānau
- T Rhodes, L Lardelli and M Gordon
- All our contractors
- Lastly, we would like to extend our sincerest greetings and thanks to our whānau. A big mihi to you all.

On behalf of the Marae Committee and the Trustees, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a fantastic New Year.

Please keep safe and well, and we look forward to catching up in 2022.



Completed stairs leading to the Mezzanine



Upgraded Mezzanine and now fire compliant



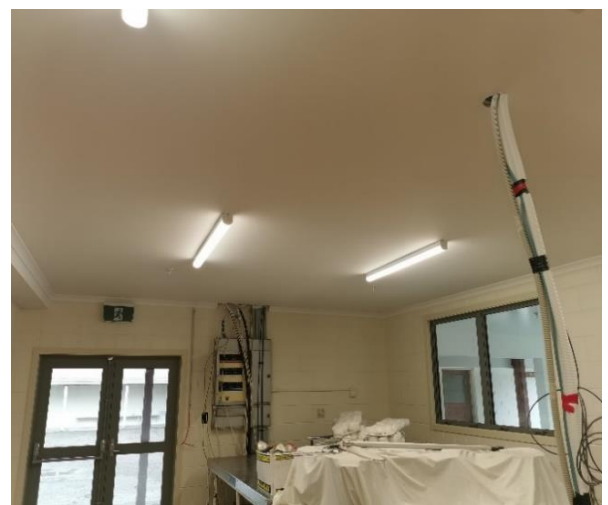
Sanding the Wharekai and polishing floors - work still in progress



Inside the Wharekai, with new lighting installed



Interior of kitchen



Interior of kitchen with new lighting



Lighting in the cooper room



Painting in the interior of kitchen



New doors and windows, reinforced concrete foot path



Downpipes, spouting, gully traps, new roof on Wharekai



Side view of Wharekai



Time to take a break, all areas around the Marae have had a fresh coat of paint. Painters have kept as near as they could to the original colour of the Marae



Side view of new roof on Wharekai



Extended concrete at the back and underground pipes



Water pump



Six newly installed tanks, now connected  
all pipes are now underground



The new Fire tank of which the Wharenui, Wharepaku and Wharekai are now all connected with through the new fire sprinkler system.  
We are now fire compliant, including the couplings on the exterior.