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Evaluating the Tangible, Acknowledging the Intangible:
The Application of Auditing, Kaitiakitanga and Collection Management
during the Tairāwhiti Museum Taonga Māori Audit

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Museum Studies at Massey University
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New Zealand

Paki-Moana Colmer
2010
For Terry and Lionel;

For Paki and Barry

Thank you
Abstract:

The objective of this dissertation is to reveal how the application of auditing and holistic collection management practices can bring about tangible and mutually beneficial outcomes for museums, Māori and taonga Māori collections. The core research of this dissertation is a case study of the Tairāwhiti Museum Taonga Māori Audit. This demonstrates the praxis of auditing; the concurrent application of kaitiakitanga and collection management principles; and the strategic outcomes that may be achieved when undertaking similar initiatives.

At present the practice and implications of auditing for museums is an underdeveloped area of enquiry. This dissertation clarifies auditing and its emergence in museum practice; the current debates surrounding it; and examples of national and international auditing to place the Tairāwhiti Museum Audit within the broader context of museum based auditing. The Tairāwhiti Museum Audit demonstrates the rationale, implementation and potential benefits of auditing as a strategic collection management tool.

To provide an epistemological framework for the Tairāwhiti Museum Audit the context of taonga Māori from the Māori worldview is clarified, and an overview of shifts toward the acknowledgement and application of mātauranga Māori principles in New Zealand museums is provided. The approach of the Tairāwhiti Museum toward the collection management of taonga has been influenced by external shifts, but more often has been progressive in its response toward meeting the expectations of local Māori and the needs of the taonga Māori collection. The Tairāwhiti Museum Audit is further evidence of this. The dissertation reveals the relevance of taonga to Māori, and demonstrates how kaitiakitanga principles can be applied to strategic collection management initiatives.
Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the entire staff, board and volunteers of Tairāwhiti Museum for their support throughout my time as Project Officer for the Tairāwhiti Museum Taonga Māori Audit, the basis of this thesis. Board member Ingrid Searanke gave generously of her time and knowledge during the Audit and writing of this thesis; her assistance was greatly valued. I wish to recognise the support and professionalism of the Audit supervisor, Jody Wyllie, who gave of his time, knowledge and provided moral support throughout the Audit process and during the writing of this thesis. I would also like to acknowledge Dr Monty Soutar, the former Director of the Tairāwhiti Museum, for his encouragement in my writing of this thesis. His determination to see the Museum take a proactive role toward many challenges; including improving the care of the taonga Māori collection, for the benefit of the Museum and the wider community, inspired the themes of this thesis.

I wish to acknowledge the sole funder of the Tairāwhiti Museum Audit and follow on projects, Te Puni Kōkiri. Mere Pohatu and Fleur Paenga of the Tairāwhiti branch of Te Puni Kōkiri have given their time in providing information for this thesis which has been greatly appreciated.

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Glossary of Māori Words

Note: Translations are provided within the body of the thesis where Māori words appear for the first time.

atua god
aurei cloak pin
harakeke phormium tenax (New Zealand flax)
hei tiki neck pendant in the shape of an anthropomorphic figure
hei matau pendant in the form of a fish hook
heke rafters
hāpu sub tribe (also pregnant)
hui meeting, gathering
hunga tiaki guardian, custodians
iwi tribe (also bones)
kaitiaki guardian, trustee, caretaker
kaitiakitanga guardianship
kapeu greenstone adornment with a curved end
karakia prayer
karetao puppet
kaumātua elder
kaupapa philosophy/ agenda
kawa protocol
kiekie freycinetia banksii (often used for weaving)
koauau flute
kōiwi human bone, human remains, corpse
kōpaki to envelop
kōrero language, knowledge, narratives
koruru carved face positioned at the apex of a meeting house gable
kotahi tangata individual person
kowhaiwhai painted scroll ornamentation
manaakitanga hospitality, kindness
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Māori</th>
<th>indigenous New Zealanders/ normal/ ordinary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mauri</td>
<td>spiritual essence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mātauranga Māori</td>
<td>Māori knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matau</td>
<td>fishhook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mekameka</td>
<td>a pendant in the form of a stylised bat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mere</td>
<td>a hand held weapon, often made of stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mokomōkai</td>
<td>preserved human heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noa</td>
<td>profane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pāhi</td>
<td>purse, wallet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pākahawai</td>
<td>fishing lure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pare</td>
<td>lintel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pātaka</td>
<td>storehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patu</td>
<td>hand held weapon usually made of wood, stone or bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pekapeka</td>
<td>a pendant in the form of a stylised bat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pēke</td>
<td>bag, sack, pack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piupiu</td>
<td>flax kilts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pōria</td>
<td>a small stone or bone ring that encircled a tamed birds leg, were also worn as pendants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pounamu</td>
<td>greenstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poupou</td>
<td>carved interior wall panels in meeting houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poutokomanawa</td>
<td>centre post in a meeting house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pōwhiri</td>
<td>welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purau</td>
<td>fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rangatiratanga</td>
<td>chieftainship, sovereignty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raranga</td>
<td>weaving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamariki</td>
<td>children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tangi</td>
<td>to cry, weep, mourn for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tangihanga</td>
<td>funeral, rites for the dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taonga</td>
<td>something of great significance that is treasured, whether tangible or intangible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
taonga tuku iho  
taonga tūturu  
tapairu  
tapu  
te reo Māori  
tika  
tikanga  
timanga  
toi Māori  
toki  
uenuku  
umu  
urupā  
waiata  
wāhi tapu  
wakatūpāpaku  
whakairo  
whakapapa  
whakapapa rākau  
whakapakoko rākau  
whakariterite  
whānau  
wharenu i  
whāriki