

## TEACHER NOTES

### **THE MORIORI OF REKOHU:** **T'chakat henu - People of the Land**



***22 August- 30 January 2011***

This exhibition is a testament to Moriori - the indigenous people of Rekohu [Chatham Island]- and their determination to reclaim their culture and identity and share it with all New Zealanders.

Education resource compiled by the Education Team at Pataka Museum of Arts and Cultures, 2010. Pataka Education programmes are supported by LEOTC (Learning Experiences Outside The Classroom) and funded by the Ministry of Education.

## ***INTRODUCTION***

The last known Moriori of full descent, Tame Horomona Rehe, later known as Tommy Solomon, died on 19 March 1933. Contrary to popular belief, Moriori people did not disappear after his death. Hundreds of Moriori descendants now live on Rekohu (Chatham Island), throughout New Zealand and around the world.



*[Bob Maysmor]*

This exhibition acknowledges and celebrates the revival of Moriori culture and identity.

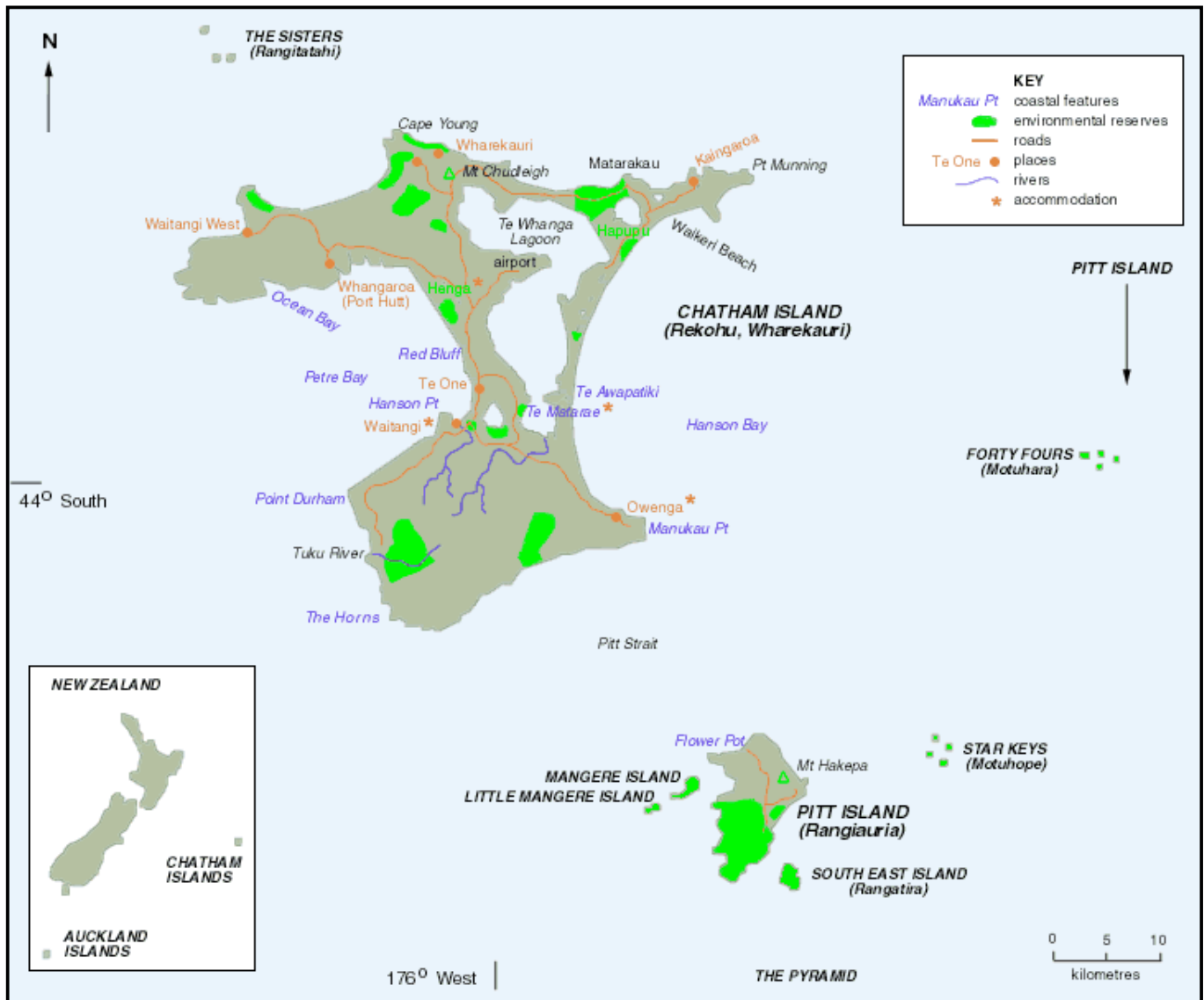
The eighteen people featured in the exhibition panels represent a number of the old families and currently live both on Rekohu and in the North and South Islands of New Zealand.



*[commons.wikipedia.org]*

## GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The Chatham Islands are a group of ten small islands that lie 800 kms due east of Christchurch, at 44°S in the Southern Pacific Ocean. Chatham Island [called Rekohu in Moriori and Wharekaui in Maori] and Pitt Island are the two largest islands inhabited with 609 residents in the 2006 census. The islands have officially been part of New Zealand since 1842.

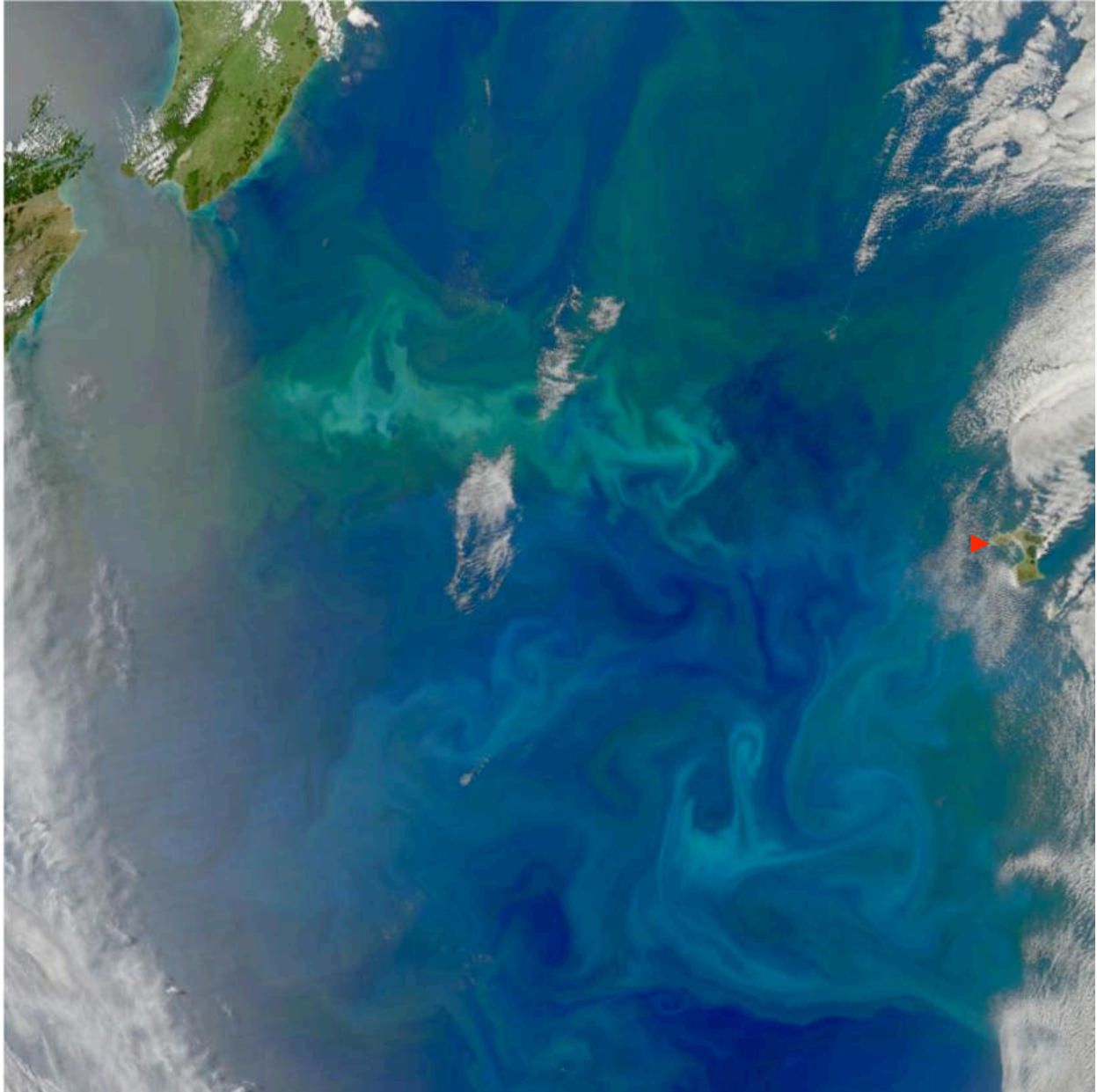


<http://www.chathams.com/framesets/mapset.html>

The town of Waitangi is the main settlement with some 200 residents and has a hospital with resident doctor, bank, several stores and the main shipping wharf. There are other villages such as Owenga, and Te One and Kaingaroa where there are two primary schools.

Time on the Chathams is 45 minutes ahead of mainland New Zealand, and Pitt Island, with 50 people, is the first inhabited land in the world to see the sunrise each day.

## The Chatham Islands, approx 800kms east of New Zealand



*N.B. [This satellite image was taken to track the green algae (phytoplankton) bloom floating between NZ and the Chathams over the Chatham Rise. [www.news.discovery](http://www.news.discovery)].*



## Who are the Moriori?

Moriori are the indigenous people of Rekohu who first inhabited the islands about 800- 900 years ago. The name Moriori comes from the term Tchakat Moriori – meaning ordinary people. The name was only used after contact with Europeans. Prior to that only tribal and personal names were used.

Moriori traditions tell us that their founding ancestor, Rongomaiwhenua, arrived directly on Rekohu from eastern Polynesia and his younger brother Rongomaitere sailed on to Aotea [thought to be Aotearoa]. Other traditions state that Moriori arrived on Rekohu from Aotearoa. At some stage there was a period of voyaging between Aotearoa and Rekohu which explains the hokopapa/whakapapa links between Moriori and mainland Maori tribes. However the tuakana [elder line] and all Moriori today trace their ancestry back to Rongomaiwhenua.

What distinguished Moriori was how they had adapted superbly to their environment and their adherence to a covenant of peace. Over 500 years ago, Nunuku-Whenua, a highly respected elder and Moriori leader outlawed warfare and killing.

*"From now and forever, never again let there be war as there has been this day. Do not kill."*

For about three hundred years Moriori lived undisturbed on Rekohu developing a culture based on peace, living in harmony with the environment and with each other. This covenant of peace was adhered to even when Moriori were faced with unwarranted invasions and aggression and through two hundred years of slavery and despair.

At the time of the first European contact in December 1791, when Lieutenant William Broughton in the brig *Chatham* arrived, there were perhaps around 2,500 Moriori living on the islands.

The subsequent arrival of sealers, pigs, cats, dogs and guns decimated traditional food resources which together with European diseases contributed to the death of hundreds of Moriori between 1800 and 1830.

With the invasion by Ngāti Tama and Ngāti Mutunga in 1835, the Moriori population was further dramatically reduced by killing, disease and slavery. After the invasion, Moriori were forbidden to marry Moriori, nor to have children with each other. All became slaves of the Ngati Tama and Ngati Mutunga invaders. Many died from despair. Many Moriori women had children to their Maori masters. A small number of Moriori women eventually married either Maori or European men. Some were taken from the Chathams and never returned. By 1862 there were only 101 Moriori left.

Despite Moriori petitions to Governor Sir George Grey in the 1860s for return of their lands, Moriori were informed by the Native Land Court in 1870 that they had been 'conquered' and therefore would receive only 2.7% of the land. The rest went to Ngāti Mutunga.

*Friend, let no other peoples of the world ask why this people did not hold to their lands. It was because we were a people who did not know anger or how to fight... We were a people who dwelt in peace, who did not believe in killing and eating their own kind.*

Extract from 1862 letter to Sir George Grey, Governor,  
signed by 30 Moriori elders



Moriori in 1877, Survivors of the 1835 Invasion – Canterbury Museum, Reference:411A Martin Album ; used with permission.

By 1900 there were only 12 full-blooded Moriori left and this number was down to six by 1904. The last known Moriori of full descent, Tame Horomona Rehe, later known as Tommy Solomon, died on 19 March 1933 and, despite the lament made at his funeral that the Moriori was now extinct, hundreds of Moriori descendants now live on Rekohu, throughout New Zealand and around the world.



A life-sized statue of Tommy Solomon was unveiled in 1986 and the then NZ Prime Minister stated that New Zealanders as a whole had a duty to see that the Moriori did not lose their place in history. From the time of the statue unveiling a Moriori revival began and in January 2005 they celebrated the opening of Te Kopinga marae [meeting house] - with full recognition for Moriori as t'chakat henu - people of the Land.



[Te Kopinga Marae image – [www.moriori.co.nz](http://www.moriori.co.nz)]

## The Hokotehi Moriori Trust

The Hokotehi Moriori Trust aims to seek redress for past injustices, and to revive the language, customs, and values of the Moriori people. The Trust has registered the names of over 600 people who identify as being of Moriori descent.

Through the Hokotehi Moriori Trust, partnerships have been established with the Aotearoa New Zealand Peace and Conflict Studies Centre Trust, the Peace and Conflict Studies Centre at Otago University and the World March for Peace.

Moriori wish to celebrate and share this culture of peace and hope with peoples of all races and creeds. *Me Rongo* – this Moriori greeting means 'in peace' and is a call that Moriori wish to share with the world.

## Contemporary Moriori

This exhibition is a testament to the fortitude and determination of Moriori descendants, either living in New Zealand or Rekohu, to reclaim their culture and identity and share it with all New Zealanders.



Those people featured in the panels include Maui Solomon, Alfred Preece, Denise Davis, John Ashton, Alfred Retimana, Amanda King, Julie Scrimgeour, Kataraina Bolger, Lin Entwistle, Lois Croon, Mavis Clarkson, Lorraine Norris, Pite Thomas, Riwai Preece, Shirley King, Dennis Solomon, Greg Preece and Tom Lanauze. Each person expresses his/ her feelings about their heritage and gives a brief summary about their background, lifestyle and aspirations.

*When I was at college in Auckland all the Pacific Island and Maori kids were told to go to the lecture room. I was challenged with What are you doing here? You are fair skinned. You're not a Moriori – you don't exist. History books had wiped us out. I responded by saying I'm breathing the same air as you.*

*One thing that I thank my grandfather for was that he told my mother never to forget she was Moriori – and mum always told us who we were*  
Amanda King.



## The Kōpi Groves

On Rekohu (Chatham Island) the kōpi (karaka) groves are important places of spirituality in Moriori culture. They are places linking the past to the present and to the future. They are places of connection with karapuna (ancestors) and places of contemplation.

The rākau momori (dendroglyphs) are carvings on living trees that represent karapuna in the after-life. The kōpi groves will be represented in the exhibition and will give your students a chance to study the unique forms and symbols that help to identify the Moriori culture.



[[www.chathams.com](http://www.chathams.com)]



## Fascinating Facts and Figures

- The name Rekohu applies to the largest island and means “misty rain.”
- The name "Chatham Island" comes from the ship *HMS Chatham* whose captain William Broughton landed in 1791, claimed possession for Great Britain and named the islands after the political head of the Royal Navy, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Chatham.
- Today, visitors to the Chathams usually arrive by air which takes between 1.5 – 2 hours from Christchurch.
- The Chatham Islands Flag (unofficial, but widely used on the Islands.)



- Until the 1980s the Chathams were in the Lyttleton electorate, but since then they have formed part of the Rongotai general electorate which mostly lies in Wellington. The Te Tai Tonga Maori seat includes the Chathams.
- Law and Order - there is one policeman on Rekohu, appointed by the Wellington Police District, who often doubles as a government official including Customs Officer, Immigration Officer and Court Registrar. A District Court judge sent from New Zealand presides over court sittings, but urgent sittings may take place at the Wellington District Court.
- Education -there are three schools on the Chathams; at Kaingaroa, Te One and Pitt Island. These schools cater from Years 1-8. There is no secondary school, so college-aged children usually attend NZ boarding schools although a few do their studies via Correspondence School.
- 609 people usually live in the Chatham Islands and there are 255 occupied dwellings and 51 unoccupied dwellings according to the 2006 census.
- At present, Rekohu is powered by a number of diesel generators. In 2009, final plans were made to install two 200 kW wind turbines to provide most of the power on the island and a project to harness wave energy has recently been awarded funding.



[www.theultimatefishingshow.com](http://www.theultimatefishingshow.com)

## Language Comparisons, *Te Rē Moriori*

Moriori language is closely related to Maori, the major differences are in the pronunciation of certain consonants and vowels ( eg. 'tch' in Moriori for the Maori 't', 'h' for 'wh', 'hoko' for the Maori prefix 'whaka' )

***Spot the similarities and differences!***

<b>English</b>	<b>Moriori</b>	<b>Maori</b>
albatross	hopo	toroa
ancestor	tupuna [s] karapuna [p/]	tupuna. [s]
authority	ihi	mana
carve	hokoairo	whakairo
chief	ieriki-ieriki	ariki, rangatira
come	haramai	haeremai
flax	harapepe	harakeke
god	tetua	atua
house	waiau whare	whare
land	whenua	whenua
people of the land	tchakat henu	tangata whenua
see	E ti(chi)	titiro
spirit	wairu	wairua
tribe	tua imi	iwi
village	kainga	kainga
visitors	manuwiri	manuhiri
whale	rongomoana	tohora
woman	wihine	wahine

*Hobo – the albatross is sacred to Moriori and its feathers are traditionally worn in the hair as a symbol of peace.*





## Pre and Post visit Classroom activities

**FIND** out who the Moriori were.

**CREATE** a time line that identifies significant events in the history of the Moriori.

**FIND** the Chatham Islands on a map. Where and how does the date line cater for the Chatham islands?

**CREATE** a fact file on the Chatham Islands as they are now.

**RESEARCH** the carved kōpi (karaka) trees found on the Chatham Islands and find images of them (rākau momori).

**FIND** out what is unique about the environment of the Chatham Islands, the flora and fauna etc.

**INTERVIEW** someone who has been to the Chatham Islands. Find out what is similar and different to New Zealand.

**INVESTIGATE** the rescue from extinction of the Chatham Island Black Robin by the Department of Conservation. Who was 'Old Blue'?



[[www.chathams.co.nz/gallery](http://www.chathams.co.nz/gallery)]

## References

- Michael King (2000). Moriori: A People Rediscovered (Revised Edition) Published by Viking 1989.
- Pataka Exhibition panels : The Moriori of Rekohu – T'chakat henu, People of the Land, curated by Bob Maysmor
- [www.chathams.com](http://www.chathams.com)
- [www.moriori.co.nz](http://www.moriori.co.nz)
- [www.education-resources.co.nz/rekohu.htm](http://www.education-resources.co.nz/rekohu.htm)