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*Did you know:
In 1900, the busy Kauri
milling township of
Kohukohu had a
population of almost
2,000 people*



Mitimiti
↓ Rawene 44KM
↓ Omapere 68KM
↓ Waipoua 99KM

Tasman Sea



15 Km

**Draft 5
Mar 2018**

6 Mitimiti Urupa

Red Gateway

2 Arai Te Uru Reserve

e Kohutu

d Pakanae

c Opononi

4 Hokianga Archives & Museum

3 Old Wharf Road

b Omapere

a Tāne Mahuta

WAIPOUA FOREST

↑ Omapere 31KM
↑ Rawene 55KM
↑ Mitimiti 99KM

1 Waipoua Forest Visitor Centre

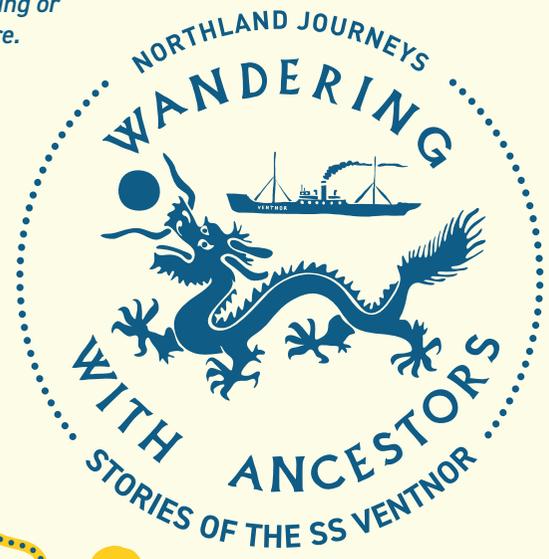
To Dargaville, Auckland Via Ancient Kauri Trail

RAWENE e

5 Rawene Cemetery

f KOHUKOHU

*Please respect sacred
urupā and cemeteries by
not eating, drinking or
smoking there.*



ANCIENT KAURI TRAIL

To Kaikohe
Bay of Islands >

TE ARA

Teheke

To Kaitiaki

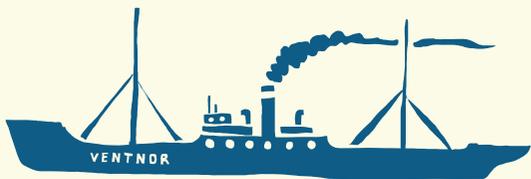
History

The beautiful Hokianga coast is the home to one of New Zealand's most moving pieces of living history. The story starts in 1902 when the *SS Ventnor*, bound for Hong Kong, sank off the Hokianga coast. Thirteen crew and passengers lost their lives. Also lost was some very special cargo: the remains of around 500 mostly goldminers who had died in New Zealand and were being returned to their families in China. To the great despair of the families, all was believed lost in the wreck.

But it was not the end of the story. In the weeks and months following the sinking, Chinese remains began to wash ashore. Up and down the coastline, local people - Māori and Pākehā - began collecting them. The tangata whenua (people of the land), Te Roroa and Te Rarawa, took special care. In the case of Te Roroa the remains were buried next to their own ancestral burial grounds and the history was passed down from generation to generation, in expectation the Chinese families would return.

In 2007, more than 100 years later, a chance meeting connected the Chinese descendant community with the people of Te Roroa and Te Rarawa. Since then, a special bond has grown between the communities based on shared history and a deep respect for ancestors. In celebration of this and in honour of those lost, a set of memorials has been built in some of the most spiritual and hauntingly beautiful areas of New Zealand.

For more information visit:
www.website.com



WANDERING WITH ANCESTORS

1 Waipoua Forest Visitors' Centre
The Waipoua Forest is the start of our journey, and the head of our dragon. It is home to the people of Te Roroa, who tell of their tūpuna (ancestors) finding both coffins and bones from the *SS Ventnor* wreck all around the tiny Kawerua harbour.

Outside the Waipoua Forest Visitors' Centre there is a memorial plaque in the Ventnor Grove presented by the Chinese community to Te Roroa in 2013. People who want to pay their respects in the traditional way can offer incense sticks at the foot of the memorial.

A must see in this area is Tāne Mahuta, the magnificent giant Kauri to the north of the site.

Further information is available at the visitors' centre, which offers a café, accommodation and information on guided tours.

2 Signal Station Point: Arai Te Uru Reserve
The look out point at the end of Signal Station Road offers spectacular views of the Hokianga harbour entrance and the coastline stretching from north to south, and out across the Tasman Sea. The site at which the *SS Ventnor* sank is at the direction of 10 o'clock, about 15 kilometers out to sea. The wreck itself is now a protected archaeological site. To the south (on the left), is Kawerua where Te Roroa gathered and buried the Chinese remains. To the north, beyond the sand dunes, is Mitimiti, the last stop in the trail. You can also see the mouth of the Hokianga Harbour and its notorious sandbar.

Arai Te Uru reserve is a significant historical site. According to Māori mythology, Arai Te Uru and Niua or Niwa were two taniwha (sea monsters) who guarded the harbour entrance. Their job was to lash out with their powerful tails and stir the waters into such a frenzy that invading waka (boats) would be swamped and rendered helpless.

3 Old Wharf Road
Of all the historic photos of the *SS Ventnor* sinking one is the most famous. The image shows lifeboats and survivors coming ashore at Ōpononi beach surrounded by rescuers. The end of Old Wharf Road is where the original 1902 photo was taken. In all, three lifeboats made it to shore. A fourth floated up on Mitimiti beach empty - 13 people had lost their lives. Old Wharf Road offers an excellent view of the sand dunes on the other side of the harbour, which are accessible by ferry.

4 Hokianga Archives and Museum
Close to Old Wharf Road is the Hokianga Archives and Museum. Staffed by volunteers from the Hokianga Historical Society, this small museum reflects the pride the community has in its history. Inside is a permanent collection and display. Check their website for opening hours: www.ourhokianga.com

5 Rawene Cemetery
On the hill overlooking the historic township of Rawene is a cemetery said to contain an unmarked grave for numerous Chinese remains.

According to local accounts, a group of people who had found remains washed ashore wanted to send them to Auckland so they could complete their journey back to China. At that time, roads were not well developed and boats were the main form of transport. The plan was to place the remains on one of the "cream boats" that serviced the Motukaraka Dairy Factory, which would then meet the coastal shipping boat bound for Auckland. Unfortunately, the superstitious crew refused to take the remains onboard, fearing the same bad luck that had sunk the *SS Ventnor*. With nowhere else to go the remains were taken to the Rawene Police Station, and a decision was made to store them in the cemetery until someone came to claim them.

The exact location of that burial has been forgotten, but in 2018 the Chinese community erected a memorial at Rawene cemetery to honour those lost, and celebrate the shared values and history that have brought together Chinese and Māori, as well as Pākehā communities of the Far North. The memorial is a significant cultural feature in the area.

6 Mitimiti Urupā - the magnificent Red Gateway
The last stop on the trail is the hauntingly beautiful coastal settlement of Mitimiti - home to the people of Te Rarawa. The wide open beach is said to be one of the remotest on the planet and along this stretch Te Rarawa tūpuna collected and buried the remains from the *SS Ventnor* wreck. Over 100 years later, a modern-day tribute to the event was built on the hill above

Matihetihe marae. Designed by Nick Grace, the magnificent Chinese-inspired gate stands in a prime spot overlooking a spectacular ocean vista. A stroll on the pristine beach is the perfect way to end the "Wandering with Ancestors" trail. To get there, drive further up the road to the grassy knoll where you can park your car. Those in the know will spot the bamboo walking poles which are set out for public use.

In the same cemetery you can also see the grave of Ralph Hotere who was born in Mitimiti and is widely regarded as one of New Zealand's most important artists.

As this urupā (cemetery) is a sacred place, please respect it by not eating, drinking or smoking in the area, and by washing your hands when you leave using the tap at the left of the entrance. Thank you.

飲水思源 (*Drinking the water, we remember its source*) - Chinese Proverb

Ngā tapuwae o ō tātau tūpuna (*The footsteps of our ancestors*) - Māori Proverb

