



MEDIA RELEASE

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Ngāpuhi play prominent role in development of new He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti exhibition in Wellington

Ngāpuhi were well represented at today's name launch for the new He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi exhibition, to open in the National Library of New Zealand in early 2017.

Today the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon Peter Dunne, announced the new permanent exhibition will be known as He Tohu – which for this exhibition means “the signs”.

Mr Dunne said the name was chosen because it refers directly to the most obvious and powerful element of the exhibition's three documents: the unique signatures or marks of those who signed them.

The third exhibition document is the 1893 Women's Suffrage Petition.

The name launch was attended by a number of manawhenua ki Poneke and iwi leaders, who have worked in partnership with the Minister throughout the project. Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi-O-Ngāpuhi Acting Chair Carol Dodd, Trustee Te Rau Arena, and kuia Winnie Leach and kaumatua Wiremu Wiremu attended the launch, and were joined by other Ngāpuhi based in Wellington.

Mrs Dodd said Ngāpuhi are spiritual kaitiaki of He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, therefore it was important to attend and support this kaupapa.

“From the outset, Ngāpuhi have been involved in this exhibition development. Raniera Tau was an inaugural member of the Minister’s iwi leaders partner group, and Allen Wihongi continues to be on the exhibition’s Māori advisory group, giving expert guidance from a Ngāpuhi tikanga and design perspective.

“For Ngāpuhi, this exhibition is momentous. Both these taonga guide us as a people, and have done so since their signing back in the early 1800s. They are our legacy, and it is our responsibility to be involved in their protection and ensure the exhibition provides a focus for all New Zealanders, not just Ngāpuhi, to learn about their historical meaning and heritage for our nation. Also, to learn about their relevance today and for our shared future.”

Mrs Dodd said Ngāpuhi looked forward to the day when talks begin about the return of these two taonga to their rightful home in Waitangi.

Photo Credit: DIA (Department of Internal Affairs)

For information contact:

Tio Taiaki

Strategic Communications Manager

media@ngapuhi.org

027 416 5027