

Pōhā

Mahinga Kai Web Series Transcript

English

Everybody used to use kelp bags to cure their birds in those days,

but we were told as kids

that whoever went to Pikomamakanui had to put their birds into pōhā

and keep that mahi alive.

I guess I’m one of the lucky ones,

I’ve got a family who have all carried it on and they’re all proficient.

The pōhā, the main part of it is the kelp bag.

So there’s about 50 different breeds of, of bull kelp.

The, the breed that we use is the rimurapa.

When you see it growing, if you see it, a goldy sort of a looking yellow colour,

a nice fine kelp, and it has a nice, what we call “honeycomb” inside.

It’s easily opened, it’s strong, and the right shape and size.

I would have learnt as much from aunties and uncles,

but my pākehā grandmother would have been, ah, the one that really contributed the most,

but a lot of others as well.

It’s the gathering really that, that is the memory,

Te Reo Māori

I whakamahia e te katoa ngā pōhā hei kōtutu i ā rātau manu i ērā rā.

I tohua mātou, nō mātou e tamariki ana,

ko te hunga ka haere atu ki Pikomamakanui me rau atu i ā rātau manu ki ngā pōhā,

kia ora tonu ai tērā mahi.

Kua waimarie pea au.

Kua ū tonu taku whānau ki tēnei mahi, ka mutu, e mātau katoa ana.

Ko te wāhanga matua o te pōhā ko te pēke rimurapa.

Tōnā rima tekau ngā momo pakakē rerekē.

Ko te rimurapa te momo ka whakamahia e mātou.

Ina kite atu koe i a ia e tipu mai ana, he momo koura, he momo kōwhai te tae,

he angiangi, ā, me kī he “honikoma” papai kei roto.

He māmā te huaki ake, he pakari, ā, ko te auaha me te rahinga e tika ana.

He nui aku akoranga mai i aku whaea, i aku pāpā,

engari, ko taku tāua Pākehā kē te mea i kaha whakaako mai.

Heoi, he tokomaha atu anō...

Ko ngā mahi kohikohi e kaha maharatia ana.



Pōhā

English

Like it's the, it's the trips up to Kaka Point to get the kelp, things like that.

There's a lot of preparation in it before actually doing it, if you know what I mean,

like the, like the gathering and travelling around.

A whole fleet of us in the old Holden

with the bacon and egg pie,

and off you go and spend the day at the beach getting kelp,

yeah, that's it, good memories.

So I'm looking for the honey comb, nice long, long bits.

All sorts of shapes, skinny bits, fat bits,

fit different size birds in of course.

So this is the stuff we can't take.
It's got a few too many holes in it.

So you can see the honey comb through the middle here, none here on the edges.

So we'll take this piece. That's coming with me!

When the wool scour started

and of course there, you had the pollution already in the river, the kelp at Omaui, when that started, the whole lot died.

Bang! And then that pollution kept coming round the coast

and we kept just ahead of it, and it came right round here to Bluff

and it killed the kelp at Papakaia, over the other side of the harbour.

Te Reo Māori

Ko ngā haerenga ki Kaka Point ki te kōhi i te rimurapa, me ērā tū mahi.

He nui ngā āhuatanga hei whakarite i mua tonu i te hanga mai,

pēnei i te kohikohi me te haereere haere.

Haere ai tō mātou tira mā runga i te waka Holden tawhito,

ka heria te pai pēkana me te hēki,

ka noho ki tātahi kōhi rimurapa ai i te roanga o te rā.

Koirā ngā maharatanga pai.

E kimi ana au i te honikoma, i ngā wāhi roa.

Ko ngā momo auaha katoa, whāiti mai, whānui mai,

kia ō atu ai ngā momo manu rerekē.

Koinei ngā wāhi tē taea e mātou te whakamahi, he nui rawa nō ngā kōhao.

E kitea ana te honikoma ki waenganui nei, engari kārekau i ngā tahataha.

Nō reira, ka tango mai au i tēnei wāhanga.

Nō te huatanga mai o te wāhi horoi wūru,

i tāhawahawatia kētia te awa, ā, i mate katoa atu te rimurapa i Omaui.

Ka ahu pēnei mai te rere o te parahanga i te ākau,

heoi, i whai oranga tonu mātou. Heoi, i tau mai ki konei, ki Murihiku,

ā, mate atu ana te rimurapa i Papakaia, i tērā taha o te pūaha.



Pōhā

English

You know now we have to go right down to Kaka Point to get our kelp,

and we've even had a problem with, with pollution there in one place.

The good thing is that the wool scour is finished in Invercargill now,

and, and um, the black kelp which is a hardy kelp and can stand more pollution than the favourite one of ours, it's come back to, to Omaui now.

So hopefully we're on the right track and things will improve...

like we've got more than I expected, that's real good

Kelp has a grain in it, depending on the plant.

Some kelp has to be opened coming up,

and this, fortunately, this one will open going down.

Limpet shell...place that inside.

That's sealed that hole off.

You work with it as it's drying.

You've gotta check that the pressure is in it, otherwise it'll shrink

how it ends up when it's dried is the shape it'll stay forever.

Some of them might be like a banana so you hang weights on them to pull them straight and shape them as you go.

So that's it, so it's, there's the patch.

We've got all different sizes.

Some years you'll get them all exactly the same and you've gotta wait till it's ready.

Te Reo Māori

Mohoa nei, me haere rawa mātou ki Kaka Point ki te tiki rimurapa,

ka mutu, kua raru tonu mātou i te parahanga i reira.

Heoi anō ko te mea pai, kua kapi te wāhi horoi wūru i Waihōpai.

Kua hoki mai te pakakē pango ki Omaui, ā, he kaha ake tana ātete i ngā parahanga, tērā i te momo tino pai ki a mātou.

Nō reira, ko te tūmanako kei te ara tika mātou ināinei, ā, ka pai haere.

He nui ake ā mātou rimurapa, tērā i tāku i whakapae ai. He pai tēnā.

He ripa tō te rimurapa – kei te āhua tonu o te tipu.

Ko ētahi rimurapa, me ahu whakarunga te huaki,

heoi, maringanui, ka huaki whakararo tēnei.

Meatia te kota kārihi ki roto.

Kua purua tērā kōhao.

Me raweke haere koe i a ia e maroke haere ana.

Me mātua whakarite koe kia rangona ai te pēhanga i roto, kei iti haere.

Ko tana auaha ka maroke ana ka mau tonu mō ake tonu.

He panana pea te hanga o ētahi, nō reira, me tautau he mähē hei whakatōtika, kia pai ai hoki tō whakaauaha i a koe e mahi ana.

Anā, koinā. Koinā te puru.

He nui ngā rahinga rerekē.

I ētahi tau, he ōrite te katoa, ā, me tatari kia rite rā anō.



Pōhā

English

This year...see that?

That's the centre one. But it's too big.

To do the, the big kete that we use on the kelp bags, on the pōhā,

you need a certain amount of whītau on that to weave together for the base of it.

There's two different fibres in flax.

There's a coarse fibre here on the outside, and, and a nice fine fibre on the centre of the flax which is what we're using.

Yeah we'll get some flax here.

They're tied up in the bundles and dunked into the, the boiling, ah, water, copper full of water

and left for only a few minutes, when,

if it's boiled too long you'll cook it and, um,

it's not palatable so it's not worthwhile cooking, so, ah,

it's just too get all the gum and impurities off it

and soften it so that it's nice and pliable and easily worked to make, ah, the kete later.

When you learned to do those baskets it took you at least five years.

And the first year all you would do is plait that bottom, that whītau there all together.

Then you'd pass it on to an uncle or an aunty, and they'd do the rest.

We just stretch it out to get the, the whole weave tight,

fit the kelp into the kete and there we are,

all ready for the bark to be placed around it.

Te Reo Māori

I tēnei tau, kei te kite atu koe?

Koinā te mea o waenganui, engari, he nui rawa.

Mō te kete nui ka whakamahia mō ngā pōhā,

me whai whītau hei raranga i tōna kaupapa.

E rua ngā momo whītau i te harakeke.

He whītau taratara kei waho nei, ā, he whītau angiangi kei waenga pū o te rau - koinei te momo e whakamahia ana e mātou.

Āe, ka tīkina he harakeke i konei.

Ka paiheretia, ka raua ai ki te wai koropupū.

Ka waiho atu mō te wā poto noa.

Ki te roa rawa te koropupūtia, ka tunua.

Ehara i te mea he reka, nō reira, kāore he take o te tunu.

Heoi anō ko te whāinga kia makere mai ngā pia me ngā parapara,

kia whakapētia hoki kia ngāwari noa ai te raweke, me te raranga i te kete ā muri ake.

Ka ako ana ki te mahi mai i ērā kete, tōna rima tau kia mau ai i a koe.

Mō te roanga o te tau tuatahi, heoi anō tāu he whiri i te wāhanga o raro, he whiri i ngā whītau katoa.

Kātahi ka tukuna ki tō pāpā, ki tō whaea rānei, ā, mā rātou e whakamutu ake.

Ka kumea roatia kia mārō te whiri,

ka raua atu ai te pōhā ki te kete.

Kātahi ka meatia te kiri ki ōna tahataha.



Pōhā

English

Tōtara is getting less and less,

all native trees are getting less and less because they've been milled and cleared for farms and all that sort of thing,

so the tōtara's, um, it's taonga I suppose you could say because, ah, without it you just wouldn't be able to do your pōhās as you do.

When the tree's ready to shed well, that's when you take what the tree gives you.

A lot of this breed of tree, the roots are right above the ground.

The rough stuff on the outside we'll put on the roots that are uncovered

because that's what nature intended,

was that that bark that's shed falls on the roots of that particular species of totara, and, ah, covers it and mulches down.

So the tree's happy and we're happy.

The, the bark that's nearest to the tree goes on the inside because it, the bark has a natural curve that way,

so we don't fight against nature, we just work with it.

So these here are just going round and round with no tension on them at all.

Once that's all done and it's secured at the top, we've gotta get right to the top.

If we tried to tension that now we're gonna pull that down.

So we've got to get right up to the top, and get that made firm there, and then we can tension it down and it's not gonna slide down.

You can see it's starting to pull together and hold it secure now.

Te Reo Māori

Kua torutoru haere ngā tōtara.

Kei te pērā hoki ngā rākau taketake katoa i te kaha o te mīrahia me te whakawāteahia atu mō ngā pāmū, me ērā tūāhua.

Nō reira, he taonga te tōtara, inā rā, i te korenga, tē taea te whakarite pēnei mai i ngā pōhā.

Ka tīmata ana te makere mai o ngā kiri rākau, hei reira koe tango mai ai i aua hua rā.

Mō te nuinga o tēnei momo rākau, kei runga tonu ngā pakiaka i te whenua.

Ko ngā wāhi kaitara o waho ka meatia ki ngā pakiaka kāore tonu i uhia.

Koinā te tikanga taiao,

kia taka iho ngā kiri rākau ki runga i ngā pakiaka o tērā tū tōtara, ka whakamākūkūtia ai.

Ka tau te rākau, ka tau hoki mātou.

Ko ngā kiri e pātata rawa ana ki te rākau ka meatia ki waenga pū, inā hoki, he pikopiko te kiri rākau.

Kāore mātou e whakararu i ngā tūāhua taiao, engari, ka whakamahia.

Heoi anō, e āmio haere noa ana ēnei, ā, kāore i paku renarena.

Oti katoa ana tērā, ā, kua ita a runga, me ahu ki runga rawa.

Mēnā i ngana mātou kia renarena ai ināinei, ka tōia mai tērā wāhanga ki raro.

Nō reira, me pakari rawa a runga, kātahi ka whakarite kia renarena ai te katoa, ā, kāore e paheke.

Kei te kitea, kua tīmata te whakakotahi mai, ā, kua ita, kua pakari.



Pōhā

English

And leave something that you can reasonably get hold, hold of and throw a decent distance.

The only thing left to do is to get rid of the excess tōtara bark on the top.

Mission accomplished!

Te Reo Māori

Ka mahue mai tētahi wāhanga he māmā noa tō kapo atu, me te whiu atu ki tawhiti.

Heoi anō ko te mahi e toe ana, ko te tango mai i ngā toenga kiri tōtara o runga.

Kua ea!

