

## TĀKATA WHENUA O HAKATERE

### PEOPLE OF THE MOUNTAINS, RIVERS, LAND & SEA

He aha te mea nui o tēnei ao, he tākata, he tākata, he tākata.

What is the most important thing in this world, it is people, it is people, it is people.



Nau Mai, Haere Mai

We the uri, the descendants  
of Hāwea, Rapuwai, Waitaha,  
Māmoe and Tahu,

We the kaitiaki, the guardians  
of this place,

Welcome you to Hakatere!

## Kā Rakatira o Hakatere

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### Hine-Paaka

Hine-Paaka was an ancestor of the Ngāi Tūhaitara hapū of Kāi Tahu and of the Kāti Māmoe people who preceded Kāi Tahu in an earlier migration to the South Island. Her name is preserved in the Hakatere district in the naming of a large mātai which stood on the edge of the Alford Forest. The tree was known as a customary marker of the Ngāi Tūhaitara claims to the region – this right was through Hine-Paaka's descent from her parents, Marukore and Tūhaitara.



### Te Rehe

Te Rehe was a Kāi Tahu leader in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was the ariki (paramount chief) for the Huirapa rohe in which Hakatere is located. His wife was Pōti and they had several children. Te Rehe and his sons regularly guided surveyors and government agents through the South Canterbury region and hosted them at Te Waiateruatī Pā on the Ōrakipaoa River. This sketch of Te Rehe was drawn by Walter Mantell (Commissioner for Extinguishing Native Claims) at Te Waiateruatī on 9 October 1848.



### Riki Te Mairaki Ellison-Taiaroa

Riki Te Mairaki Ellison-Taiaroa was widely recognised as an authority on South Island Māori matters having been steeped in Māori history and lore by his great-grandmother Tini Kerei Taiaroa and great-uncle Riki Te Mairaki Taiaroa, the wife and son of Hori Kerei Taiaroa. Uncle Riki, lived at Taumutu on the shores of Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere). He had close connections to the wider community of Ashburton as a historian and a respected award-winning dairy farmer. In the 1970s he was instrumental in the establishment of Māori support networks in the Hakatere district including the Hakatere Marae.



# Ara Tawhito

Māori were the first people to travel through the Hakatere (Ashburton) region and to rely on its natural resources. Tākata whenua in the area are Hāwea, Rapuwai, Waitaha, Kāti Māmoe and Kāi Tahu. Historically tākata whenua were very mobile and dependent on a wide range of natural resources throughout Te Wai Pounamu (South Island) for their survival. They developed a way of life closely related to the natural resources of their wider environment. This involved regular excursions through the Hakatere region in search of seasonal food resources, stone materials, and as a pathway to other parts of Te Wai Pounamu.

Hakatere was traversed by ara tawhito (traditional trails) which served as main highways for tākata whenua, leading to and from Te Waiateruatī (later Arowhenua), Taumutu and kāika (settlements) further afield. The Hakatere, Rakaia and Rangitata Rivers were all traditional Māori trails to the Mid Canterbury foothills, which was an important source of mahika kai for local Kāi Tahu. There was a coastal route to and from the north of the Rakaia River and inland routes to the pounamu (greenstone) trails to Te Tai Poutini (West Coast). These routes were carefully selected to pass sites where food, water and shelter were always available and to negotiate the vast swamplands in the area.



## Mahika Kai

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The gathering and preparation of food and other bounties of nature in Te Wai Pounamu was based around kāika nohoanga (permanent or seasonal camps), each situated near a particular resource to be worked, and with access to water. Some seasonal camps were located among the rivers, plains and lakes of the Hakatere region. In the harsh winter, interior camps were generally deserted, but in summer they were occupied by eeling and birding parties. The natural and physical resources and traditional areas such as mahika kai sites within the Hakatere region remain culturally and spiritually important to tākata whenua today.



This map shows the location of mahika kai sites and settlements in the Hakatere district. These ikoa wāhi (place names) were recorded by the Kāi Tahu leader Hori Kerei Tairaoa from information provided by Kāi Tahu informants in 1880. The map is an important tribal taoka (treasure) which is being used today to help map Kāi Tahu place names and histories on a geographic information system that will provide new generations of Kāi Tahu with access to this mātauraka (knowledge).

## Te Pātaka o Hakatere

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tūī

kākā

weka

kākāpō

kererū

Manu (birds) were a rich resource for tākata whenua in Hakatere providing meat, oil and feathers for adornment. Hinu weka (weka oil) in particular was utilised as a carrier oil for perfumes, as a remedy for inflammation and as an ingredient in pigment for rock art.



tī kōuka

rimu

tikumu

aruhe

Rākau (trees) and other plants in the region were utilized by tākata whenua for weaving, food, building and medicine. Aruhe (bracken fern) provided an important source of carbohydrate. The stems and roots of tī kōuka were cooked in large umu tī (earth ovens) to produce a nutritious sweet food called kāuru and the leaves were used for weaving. The tikumu (mountain daisy) was also prized as a weaving resource and rimu was utilized for its medicinal properties.



tuna

kākahi

akiaki

kōura

Awa (rivers), swamps and waterways in the region provided tuna (eels), kōura (fresh water crayfish) and kākahi (freshwater mussels). Waterways were also favourite nesting sites for sea birds such as the akiaki (red billed gull). Traditionally Kāi Tahu collected eggs along the rivers and beaches of Hakatere.



kiore

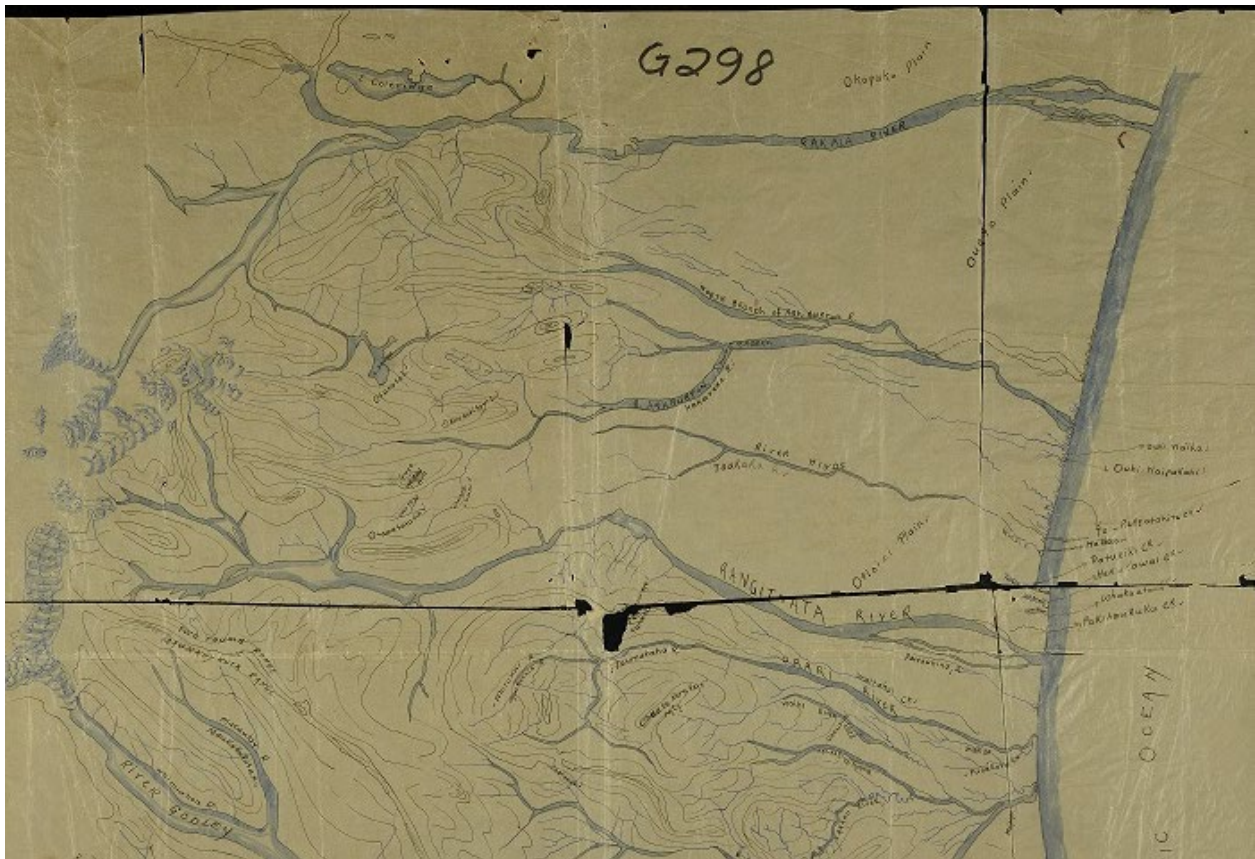
Kiore (native rats) were trapped seasonally during their mass migrations to feeding grounds in the foothills and forests. Tākata whenua placed snares along well-established ara kiore (rat trails) which followed the same routes year after year. Kiore were singed, plucked and cooked in a hāngī or grilled and preserved in their own fat.

## Kā Awa

The awa (rivers) of the Hakatere District are of immense significance to Kāi Tahu. The Rangitata, Hekeao, Hakatere and Rakaia are all sourced in Kā Tiritiri-o-te-moana (the Southern Alps), flowing down through gorges into a network of tributaries and small creeks on the lower flood plains and thence into the hāpua (lagoons) and river mouths along the coast. Permanent kāika (settlements) were located at the river mouths at various times, including at the Rakaia where the famous moa-hunter archaeological sites provide physical evidence of occupation dating back to the earliest period of habitation in Te Wai Pounamu.

Rivers were challenging to cross, particularly when in flood. In his recollections of the Ngāi Tahu flight south following the fall of Kaiapoi Pā in 1832, Natanahira Waruwarutu described the tūwhana method of river crossing employed at the Rakaia. His words are translated:

*“There we made poles for crossing the river. The stronger men intertwined themselves together at the top and bottom ends of the pole. There was one person who would give the signals and he was the one that swam out ahead. The poles were released towards the drier parts of the river. The men further up grasped the poles and donned their rain capes, and the current was diverted to either side so that those in the middle could travel more easily.”*



The awa (rivers) of the Hakatere district feature prominently on this map showing ikoa wāhi (place names) recorded by the surveyor Thomas Brodrick from information provided by Rawiri Te Maire in 1898. Rawiri Te Maire was a highly respected 19th century Kāi Tahu leader and an invaluable source of Māori history, traditions and place names. At the time these names were recorded, Te Maire was very old, but his knowledge of the names and localities was exact.

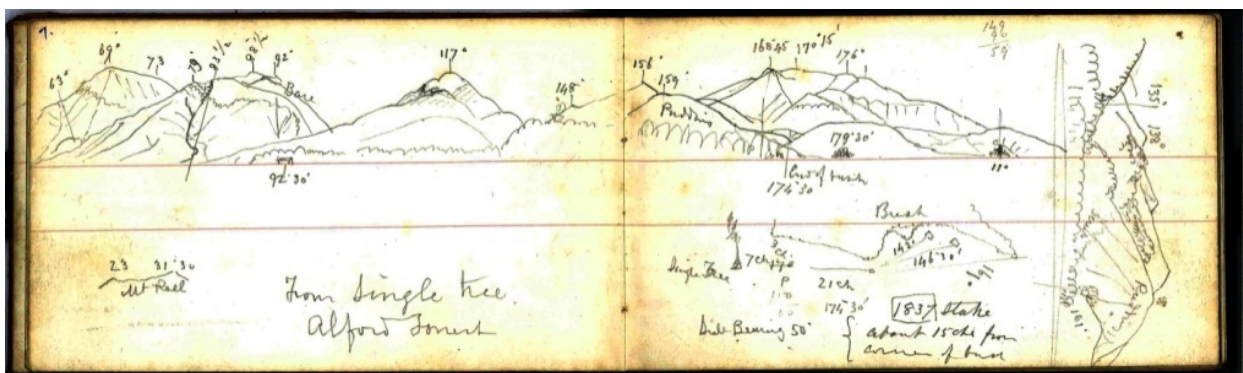
## Hine-Paaka – Single Tree

Hine-Paaka was a large mātai that stood on the edge of the inland foothills marking a significant mahika kai (food gathering site) between the Rakaia and Hakatere rivers. Birding parties frequented this area to set snare perches, or use birding spears to catch kākā, kererū and other birds.

Named for the Ngāi Tūhaitara and Kāti Māmoe ancestor Hine-Paaka, the tree was a customary marker of Ngāi Tūhaitara’s claims to the region. Turakautahi, the ariki (paramount chief) who guided the final Ngāi Tūhaitara expedition into the South Island, claimed Hine-Paaka as his fowling tree - an old term for trees used by hunting parties to hang their daily catch of weka, kererū and other forest birds. Hine-Paaka also served as a boundary marker.

Early Pākehā who farmed the land where Hine-Paaka stood reportedly tried twice to cut the tree down only to return next morning to find it erect in its former position with no signs of axe marks. The land where the tree stood became known as ‘Singletree Farm’ and the tree was fenced off for its protection. By the early 20th century Hine-Paaka had become a skeleton of its former self and was eventually blown down in 1945 by a major storm. Today, a plaque and mātai nearby mark the spot where this important taoka (treasure) once stood.

In 1976, at the suggestion of Alford Forest resident Mr. George Rountree, Kāi Tahu and Hakatere Marae representatives took part in the planting of a mātai tree to replace Hine Paaka. Prior to the planting, a tapu lifting ceremony was conducted at the site by Kāi Tahu kaumātua (elders) Riki Ellison-Taiaroa and Paani Manawatu (Upoko of Ngāi Tūāhuriri) and Māori ministers, Rev. J. Manahi (Ratana), W. Tahere (Methodist), and B. Tūrei (Anglican). Photo left to right: Rex Milne (Farm Owner); Bill Hart planting tree, County Council Chairman; Riki Ellison, head only behind Hart; George Rountree in dark suit extreme right.



Hine-Paaka was used as a reference point by the surveyor Robert Park when he surveyed the Ashburton district in the 1860s. Hine-Paaka is identified as ‘Single Tree’ in this drawing taken from his sketchbook.

## Ō Tū Wharekai – Ashburton Lakes

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Ō Tū Wharekai is the Kāi Tahu name used to refer to both the wider Ashburton Lakes area as well as being the specific name of the two small interconnected wetlands within the area, more commonly known as the Māori Lakes. It is an area of immense cultural significance to tākata whenua, being both an important seasonal mahika kai (food gathering site) and a major travelling route between the settlements on the eastern coast of Te Waipounamu (the South Island) and those on Te Tai Poutini (the West Coast). There are numerous Kāi Tahu place names for mountains, rivers, lakes and settlements associated with Ō Tū Wharekai. Archaeological evidence including middens, ovens, rock shelters and a quarry site also support tākata whenua traditions of Māori occupation and use of the area.

Resources that were gathered from Ō Tū Wharekai include aruhe (bracken fern), tī kōuka (cabbage tree), tikumu (mountain daisy), mataī, kākā, kākāpō, kererū, tūī, weka, tuna (eel), kākahi (freshwater mussel), kōura (freshwater crayfish) and kiore (native rat).



## Tarawhata – Kāi Tahu Guide

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Tarawhata was the son of the Kāti Huirapa raketira (chief), Te Rehe. In 1843-44, Tarawhata guided Edward Shortland (Protector for the Aborigines) through South Canterbury to Akaroa during Shortland's census of the southern Māori population of New Zealand. As they travelled, Tarawhata shared his extensive knowledge of the geography of the area with Shortland who was surprised to find that there were Māori names given to many small streams and ravines which he perceived were scarcely worthy of notice. On reaching the Whakanui, they filled water bottles left purposely on the banks for travellers as there was no fresh water between there and the Rakaia, a day's travel away. This 'desert' leg of the journey was best undertaken very early or late in the day to avoid the risk of dehydration.



In 1848, Tarawhata and his father Te Rehe were part of another party that accompanied Walter Mantell (Commissioner for Extinguishing Native Claims) through the Hakatere region. When the group arrived at the pā at Te Waiateruatī, Tarawhata ushered them through a crowd of spectators to his father's house which was always given up to travellers. This sketch by Walter Mantell shows the travelling party's camp sites at Pūrākaunui Lagoon on 3 October, on the south bank of the Rangitata River on 4 October and at Te Waiateruatī Pā on 7 October 1848.

## Kemp's Deed

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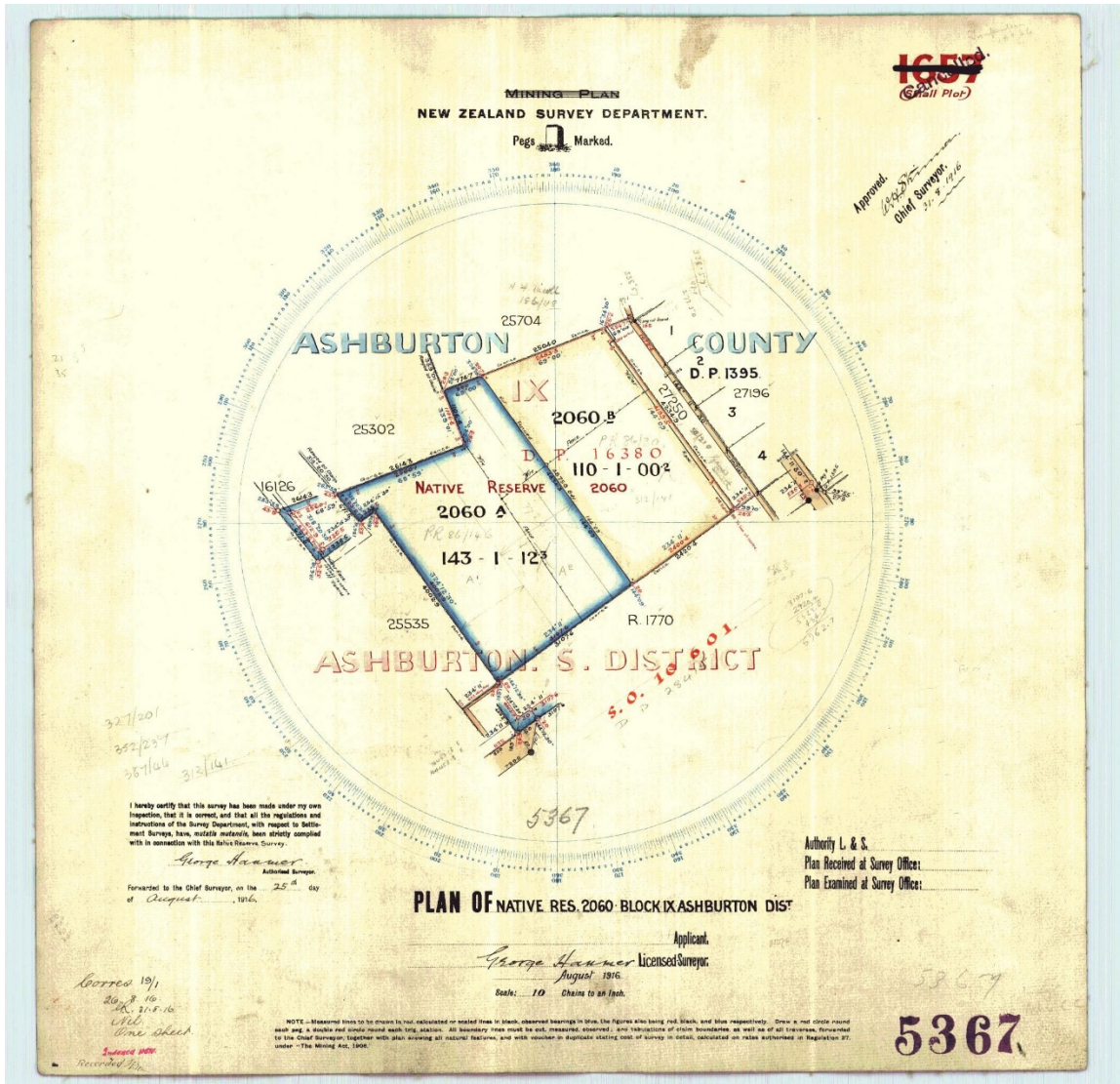
In 1848 the Crown purchased 14 million acres of land from Maukatere (Mount Grey) in North Canterbury to Maukaatua, near Dunedin, known as the Canterbury Deed of Purchase or Kemp's Deed (after the land commissioner, Henry Kemp, who negotiated the purchase). A key promise under Kemp's Deed was that the Crown would protect and reserve traditional mahika kai of Kāi Tahu. However, this did not happen and many traditional Kāi Tahu food gathering areas, such as lagoons, swamps, wetlands and forests, were sold and destroyed.

Walter Mantell (Commissioner for Extinguishing Native Claims) was charged with surveying and mapping out Māori reserves within the Canterbury Purchase. Mantell did not survey any reserves in the Hakatere region and the minimal reserves that were surveyed in wider South Canterbury did not allow for the seasonal round of hunting and gathering which had customarily been carried out by tākata whenua across a wide area. As a consequence, many local Māori became landless and were rendered trespassers when visiting their traditional mahika kai.



# Māori Reserves in the Hakatere District

Two Māori Reserve allocations were later made by the Crown in the Ashburton District in 1877. These reserves at Rakaia and Ashburton were specific allocations to Kaiapoi Kāi Tahu. Today part of the Rakaia Māori Reserve remains in Māori ownership. The Ashburton Māori Reserve has passed into general title and is partly taken up by the Ashburton golf course.



## Whakanui

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Whakanui on the coast to the south-east of Ashburton township was one of a chain of kāika (villages) and kāika nohoaka (temporary campsites) located at river mouths along the eastern coastline of Te Wai Pounamu. Many taoka (treasures) and other archaeological remains have been recovered from Whakanui since the 1950s.

The site was partly excavated in 1971 and 1972 by the Canterbury Museum Archaeological Society and local community members associated with the nearby Wakanui School. Accumulations of burnt and fire cracked rocks, blackened soil and charcoal were recorded, in association with stone taoka and flakes from stone working, midden of moa bone and other faunal remains. Post holes and tamped floors were also discovered and an unusual baked clay feature comprising two linked 'basins'.

Sadly, at the time the excavations took place, the role of tākata whenua in the management of their own taoka (treasures) and heritage was not widely acknowledged in New Zealand, so there was no tākata whenua involvement. The taoka excavated from Whakanui are of great significance to tākata whenua as they provide a tangible connection to the tūpuna (ancestors) who once lived there.



The Whakanui waterway, now incorrectly publicly recorded as 'Wakanui Creek', was an important mahika kai site where kiore (native rat), birds, aruhe (bracken fern) and paraki (smelts) were gathered.

## Contemporary Māori in Hakatere

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### *Kāi Tahu*

Members of the Kāi Tahu hapū (subtribes), Kāti Huirapa, Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki and Ngāi Tūāhuriri have shared interests within the boundaries of the Ashburton District. They hold kaitiaki (guardianship) obligations for many of the natural and physical resources in the region. As such, they have a close and ongoing concern with land, waterways and other taoka (treasures).

Arowhenua Rūnaka based at Arowhenua, Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga based at Tuahiwi and Te Taumutu Rūnanga, based at Taumutu on the shores of Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere) are the local representative groups, similar to local government, which protect and defend rakatirataka (chieftainship) and the cultural and social values of Kāi Tahu in the Ashburton District. These Rūnaka are also the caretakers of traditional knowledge and customary expertise in the area.



Te Hapa o Niu Tireni,  
Arowhenua Marae,  
Temuka.



Moki, Taumutu Marae, Taumutu.



Maahunui II, Tuahiwi Marae,  
Tuahiwi.

### *Hakatere Marae*

Throughout the twentieth century, the Māori population of Ashburton District has never been large, though a small and transient population was encouraged by employment opportunities in the Fairfield Freezing Works and in shearing gangs. A Māori Women's Welfare League and a Youth Club were established in the 1960's. In 1970 the Mid Canterbury Māori Committee, chaired by the Kāi Tahu rakatira (chief) Riki Ellison of Taumutu, obtained a lease from the Government for the disused Fairton school building and established the Hakatere Marae. The name was given to reflect the name of the river. The building was bought five years later and the land is now a Māori Reserve. It is administered by the Hakatere Māori Komiti Trust. The six original elected trustees were Lehi Meha, Archie Keepa, Janet Benfell, Mason Tuki, Thelma Reid, and Bella Moore.

Today, Hakatere Marae caters for tākata whenua and community groups within the Hakatere district. The marae is a community marae that is not iwi specific.

