

**BACKGROUND HISTORY OF
WENDERHOLM REGIONAL PARK
AND ARCHAEOLOGY**

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BACKGROUND HISTORY OF WENDERHOLM REGIONAL PARK

Wenderholm Regional Park has a human history that spans approximately one thousand years. The majority of this history concerns the Maori occupation of the area which lasted until the late nineteenth century. Today the most obvious signs of this long Maori history are the numerous archaeological surface features that are found throughout the park. This history is also reflected in the Maori place names of the area, most of which are no longer in current usage.

The Wenderholm Regional Park forms a small part of a district known to the Maori as 'Mahurangi', a name which is taken from the rocky island 'pa' located at the mouth of the Waiwera River. This island, which is joined to the Regional Park, by a reef exposed at low tide, was seen by the Maori as the historical and spiritual focal point of the surrounding district. The locality was also often referred to by the name 'Waiwerawera' which came from the district's outstanding feature, the hot springs located at the southern end of Waiwera Beach.

A number of specific locality names were applied to areas within the Park, although Wenderholm was generally referred to as 'Puhoi', taking this name from 'Te Awa Puhoi' or 'the slow flowing river'. Present day Puhoi, while also having many locality names, was generally referred to as 'Okahu'. Wenderholm Regional Park has two basic geographical divisions, both of which had general names. The flat sandy country that makes up the northern portion of the Park was known as 'Te Akeake', while the high forested southern portion was known as 'Maungatauhoro'. The area above the high bluffs over looking the mouth of the Waiwera River was known as 'Mihirau' and the 'pa' located within this area as 'Kakaha'. 'Mihirau' was, and still is, a place of extreme historical and spiritual significance, not only because of its historical associations, but as the burial place of 'Rangatira' or chieftains over many generations. Below 'Mihirau' on the northern side of the Waiwera River entrance is a small bay known as 'Kokoru'. These Maori place names, which reflect the history and topography of the Regional Park, have been submerged by 120 years of European settlement and none are now in common usage.

The Maori history of Wenderholm Regional Park is complex and totally interrelated with the history of the surrounding district north beyond Pakiri to Te Arai Point, west to Kaipara and south to the Waitemata Harbour. Although Wenderholm has its own Maori historical associations these cannot be viewed in isolation from the migrations, occupations and conquests that shaped the history of the surrounding region. Wenderholm, located as it is between the Waiwera and Puhoi River mouths, was always an extremely desirable place to live because of its bountiful resources. It was located in close proximity to the famous hot springs, and the two rivers gave excellent access inland to the main pathways running overland to Kaipara. Wenderholm also had a plentiful supply of fresh water, and the sandy soils on the warm, frost free, north facing slopes of Maungatauhoro were ideal for the cultivation of kumara. The area also provided excellent fishing and a bountiful shellfish resource, as well as being in close proximity to the famed Mahurangi shark fishing grounds. Wenderholm not only offered 'kaimoana' or the food resources of the sea but also offered the resources of the forest. These included: birds, berries and timber, in particular large totara and kauri located near to the water's edge which were ideal for the construction of canoes.

The Wenderholm area has been occupied since the first period of Maori settlement that took place over one thousand years ago. It is a site with features typical of the earliest known settlement sites in the country, located as it is on a sandy spit at the mouth of a large river. Future archaeological studies may throw more light on this, however tradition indicates that the area, like the offshore islands and the coastline to the south, was settled by the 'Turehu'. These people, literally those 'from the earth' were seen as the first inhabitants of 'Te Ika a Maui' or Maui's Fish (the North Island). The 'Turehu' were later absorbed by another early people, the 'Tini o Maruiwi', who migrated from Taranaki and came to occupy the Tamaki and Kaipara districts. Toi te huatahi the famous explorer visited the Mahurangi coastline at the same time as he gave his name to Little Barrier or 'Hauturu o Toi'. His grandchild Te Kauea

migrated north through Kaipara with his son Toko o te rangi and they left descendants in the area, some of whom spread eastward into the Mahurangi district.

By the fourteenth century migrations associated with some of the famous ancestral voyaging canoes had begun to influence the Mahurangi area. These migrants conquered and absorbed the Maruiwi people and the descendants of Toi. From the north came the 'Ngai Tahu' people, the descendants of Tahuhunui the commander of the 'Moekakara' canoe which landed at a small bay at the southern end of Pakiri Beach. From the south came the descendants of members of the crew of the Tainui canoe who had settled around the Waitemata Harbour. These people, who also had Arawa tribal affiliations, had by the sixteenth century become known by the general name of 'Ngaoho'. They had intermarried with the earlier tribal groups, including Ngai Tahu who they pushed to the north, and were in occupation of all of the land between the Waikato River the Kaipara Harbour entrance, including Mahurangi.

This tribal group was divided into many smaller 'hapu' or sub tribal groups' and for this reason they were also sometimes referred to as 'Ngariki'. They occupied the Mahurangi area, including the Puhoi River Valley, until the early 1600's when they in turn were conquered by another tribal group that had migrated to the region from the south. It was from this latter conquering group that the Maori people occupying what is now Wenderholm Regional Park claimed traditional ownership of the land in the Land Court hearings of the 1860's.

At the time of European contact in the early nineteenth century the Mahurangi area (including Wenderholm) was occupied by a tribal group known variously as 'Te Kawerau' and 'Ngati Rongo'. These two tribal names, used by the one tribal group, resulted from the marriage of a man and a woman made in order to secure peace between two large migratory groups in the early 1600's. These two tribal names are often used by people writing about the history of the Mahurangi district and need some explanation, in particular as they were associated with the Wenderholm area for 350 years. Although by the nineteenth century the Maori occupants of the district were generally referred to as Ngati Rongo, it was their Kawerau ancestors that gave them 'mana whenua' or traditional 'ownership rights' to the land.

As Te Hemara Tauhia the leading 'Rangatira' of these people in the European settlement period stated in 1866 - "The name of one portion of my ancestors are called Ngati Rongo but the Kawe-rau, who are another portion of my ancestors were the original proprietors of the soil." (Native Land Court, Waiwera, January 25, 1866). The Kawerau people, from whom the land (including what is now the Wenderholm Regional Park) was claimed, descended from a large group of Ngati Awa people who had migrated north to the Tamaki Isthmus from Kawhia in the 1620's. Led by Maki, the most famous ancestor of the Mahurangi people, they initially conquered Tamaki and settled at Rarotonga (Mt Smart). Then over the next generation they spread northward conquering the islands of the Hauraki Gulf north to 'Hauturu' (Little Barrier), the Kaipara district north to Harbour entrance, as well as the east coast from Takapuna to Te Arai. This conquest included Mahurangi where the people of Ngaoho and Ngai Tahu descent were defeated and absorbed.

From an incident involving Maki during the conquest of Kaipara the tribal name 'Kawe-rau' arose and this became the general tribal name for his descendants. Maki and his brothers Mataahu and Maeaeariki settled for a time in the desirable Waiwera and Puhoi areas. They and their families then spread out into the surrounding region to form their own settlements. Maki himself settled nearby at Te Korotangi just north of the Mahurangi Regional Park. One of his sons, Manuhiri, who was also an important ancestor of the Mahurangi people, moved to the eastern shores of the Kaipara Harbour and left many descendants in this area as well as on the coastline north of Pakiri. Ngawhetu, another son of Maki, remained in occupation of the conquered territory between Puhoi and Waiwera. It was from the occupation by Ngawhetu that Te Hemara Tauhia and his people claimed 'ownership' of the three land blocks that now make up Wenderholm Regional Park: Puhoi, Maungatauhoro and Te Akeake.

Soon after the Kawerau conquest and occupation of the region had taken place another important migration into the area was taking place. A tribal group known by their descendants

under the general name of 'Nga ririki' had migrated south from Hokianga into the northern Kaipara in the late 1600's. These people, also referred to as Ngati Whatua, were led by a famous ancestor Haumoewharangi and had settled on the northern shores of the Kaipara Harbour by 1680. The seven children of Haumoewharangi settled throughout the Kaipara area and they became the founding ancestors of the 'hapu' or subtribal groups that occupy the Kaipapa district today. One of these children was Rongo whose descendants 'Ngati Rongo' settled on the north eastern shores of the Kaipara Harbour.

While the Ngati Whatua 'hapu' fought with the Kawerau people, they also concluded a number of important marriages to secure peace. This included the marriage of Ngawhetu of Te Kawerau to Moerangaranga the daughter of Rongo. This couple, who initially lived near the Kaipara Harbour entrance, also lived for a long period at Waiwera and in the Puhoi River Valley at what is now Wenderholm. Here they had a number of children from whom Te Hemara Tauhia and his people traced direct descent. From this marriage came the tribal names used by the people of Wenderholm. Ngawhetu their male ancestor gave them their claim to the land and the tribal name 'Te Kawerau' while Moerangaranga their female ancestor gave them their other tribal name 'Ngati Rongo'.

Intermarriage between these two migratory groups brought another famous ancestor to the Mahurangi area. He was Pokopoko-whiti-te-ra, a nephew of Rongo. He married Taumutu the daughter of Ngawhetu and they lived for long periods in the Puhoi area. Here he became famous for his exploits, in particular for killing a 'taniwha' that had attacked the local people using the overland pathway from Orewa to Kaipara. Pokopoko-whiti-te-ra lived throughout the Kaipara district but returned to Mahurangi in old age where he died. He was buried on Maungatauhoro in the Wenderholm Regional Park, thus giving the area immense significance to his descendants.

Ngawhetu ultimately left the Puhoi River Valley and moved to the northern Kaipara area. However he left some of his children and grandchildren in occupation of the Mahurangi district where their descendants remained until this century. The people who occupied what is now the Wenderholm Regional Park were intimately related to the Ngati Rongo people who lived in the area west to Kaukapakapa and north to the Hoteo River. This relationship remained of central importance throughout the Maori occupation of the Puhoi River Valley and both groups visited each other regularly.

The descendants of Ngawhetu who occupied Wenderholm were also closely related to the subtribal groups that descended from Maki and his brothers. In particular they maintained close ties with the 'Ngati Manuhiri' 'hapu' of Te Kawerau who occupied the eastern shores of the Kaipara as well as the eastern coastline north to Te Arai. As the influence of the Ngati Whatua 'hapu' grew in the southern Kaipara throughout the early 1700's the name 'Te Kawerau' was used less often and the name 'Ngati Rongo' became more commonly used. However the Kawerau people on the fringes of the region maintained their distinct identity. The Kawerau people of Mahurangi maintained a close relationship with the 'Kawerau a Maki' people of the Waitakere area, and also with the Te Akitai people of Pukaki on the Manukau Harbour who shared descent from Ngawhetu. Contact and intermarriage between these groups was maintained until the early twentieth century with the Mahurangi area, including Wenderholm, continuing to be a place of central spiritual and historical importance to all of these tribal groups.

At the time of the arrival of the first Europeans in the Mahurangi district in the mid 1820's the descendants of the Kawerau conquerors remained in occupation of their ancestral land. One of the most desirable occupation sites was the area surrounding the Puhoi River mouth which had a wide variety of natural resources already outlined. The Ngati Rongo - Te Kawerau people did not occupy permanent settlement sites, but as with all Maori people in pre-European times they migrated over their land in a seasonal cycle of fishing, hunting, gathering and harvesting. They maintained 'kainga' or occupation sites throughout the Puhoi River Valley including several on what is now Wenderholm Regional Park.

Archaeological evidence indicates that settlement was concentrated on the northern slopes of Maungatauhoro as well as the extensive tableland above. Cultivations were located on Maungatauhoro, beside the Puhoi River (on the north western edge of the Park), as well as on the sandy flats of Te Akeake. There were also major cultivations at Te Muri and above the eastern end of Otarawao Bay. Wenderholm was undoubtedly an important site for fishing and shellfish gathering and the people of the area also crossed the mouth of the Puhoi River to gather berries from a renowned karaka grove, 'Te Oro Karaka'. Another resource, that would undoubtedly have been used regularly was 'Waiwerawera', the hot springs located on the foreshore at the southern end of Waiwera Beach. (These springs were also referred to in post European times as 'Te Rata' or 'the Doctor'). The people of the Wenderholm area also travelled to Waihe (the Mahurangi River) and beyond to the sandspit at the mouth of the Matakana River to catch the 'muri' shark in season.

These latter resources, the hot water springs and the shark fishing grounds were coveted by other tribal groups throughout the region. In particular they were desired by the tribes of the powerful Marutuahu confederation who occupied the Hauraki Gulf. They included: Ngati Maru, Ngati Whanaunga, Ngati Tamatera and Ngati Paoa. While these Hauraki tribes were related to the tribes of the Mahurangi coastline through Kawerau and particularly Tainui descent, enmity developed between the two groups over the control and use of the famed shark fishing grounds of Mahurangi.

Fighting between the Marutuahu tribes and the Kawerau people of Mahurangi began in the 1720's and continued throughout the eighteenth century. Fortunes fluctuated with victories being gained by both tribal groups. There is no evidence that this fighting took place in the Wenderholm area although one battle was fought on Waiwera Beach. Maungatauhoro, the highest point in the park, was, however, the gathering place of the Kawerau 'hapu' (sub tribes) when they combined to travel south to fight the Hauraki tribes in the late 1770's. A combined 'taua' or war party led by Te Maeaea of Tawharanui, Whetu of Makarau and Ponui of Mahurangi left Maungatauhoro and defeated a Hauraki force at Kawakawa Bay in the north western Hauraki Gulf. The war party returned to the Mahurangi area victorious. The jaw bone of a leading Hauraki Rangatira was made into a hook for shark fishing at a place north west of Wenderholm Park known as 'Hi-kauae' or 'to fish with a jawbone'. This naturally led to further fighting and the Marutuahu tribes, then at the zenith of their power, were victorious in battles at Waihe (Mahurangi Heads) and as far west as Taranaki and Rangitepu north of Araparera.

The Marutuahu tribes had taken control of many of the islands of the Hauraki Gulf and occupied a large tribal domain in the Hauraki District extending south into the Waihou and Piako River valleys. Land was not what they sought in the Mahurangi district, but rather the 'tauranga ika' or fishing grounds where thousands of sharks could be caught and dried in summer, and then taken home to the Hauraki Gulf to provide a valuable winter food source. The Hauraki tribes were in the ascendancy by the 1780's however enmity continued to exist between them and the Mahurangi people who remained in occupation of the district.

Finally a peacemaking meeting was called between the two tribal groups. Significantly this historic meeting took place in the vicinity of Kakaha Pa on Maungatauhoro the high tableland that makes up the southern portion of the Wenderholm Regional Park. The greetings or 'Mihi' between the two groups were long and profuse and a number of gifts were exchanged. This led to the name 'Mihirau' being bestowed on the locality to commemorate this historic peace settlement. A young Kawerau woman, a great grandchild of Maki, was handed to Ngati Paoa as a wife for one of their Rangatira, and they in turn gifted a 'mere pounamu' or greenstone weapon to Te Kawerau. The Hauraki people then spent the night at Mahurangi Pa off Waiwera and prepared to return to their homes. During the night, however, the young Kawerau woman was retaken by her people and the 'mere pounamu' was returned to Ngati Paoa because the Kawerau people felt that the Hauraki people had placed a 'makutu' or curse on them, and caused a storm which upset some of their canoes. Thus the peace established at 'Mihirau' was broken and fighting resumed soon after. Warfare between the two tribal groups continued until the 1790's by which time the Marutuahu tribes gained permanent ascendancy

after a major victory at Te Ngaere north of Matakana. They now controlled the fishing grounds of Mahurangi and often used the hot springs at Waiwera, however the depleted Kawerau sub tribal groups continued to occupy the Mahurangi coastline including Wenderholm.

The people of Wenderholm lived in peace, although under the hegemony of the Marutuahu tribes, until the 1820's when both peoples faced a new threat from Ngapuhi war parties armed with muskets. Ngapuhi defeated a combined Ngati Whatua force, that included many Mahurangi people, at 'Te Ika a Ranganui' near Kaiwaka in mid 1825 and in late 1825 a Ngapuhi party attacked the Mahurangi coastline. The local people armed only with wooden and stone weapons were easily defeated and they were forced to flee their homeland. At this time a famous Ngati Rongo warrior Murupaenga, from Makarau on the Kaipara, was killed at sea off Wenderholm and as a descendant of Ngawhetu he was buried at 'Mihirau' thus increasing the importance of this sacred place.

Some of the Mahurangi people took refuge with relatives in lower Northland and the Bay of Islands although most of them fled south into the Waikato where they lived with Ngati Koroki at Maungatautari near Cambridge. For nearly a decade Mahurangi was depopulated and the Te Kawerau - Ngati Rongo people did not return to the Wenderholm area until around 1836. In 1857, Te Hemara gifted the Opahi Block at what is now known as Waikato Bay, to Ngati Koroki to repay the protection they had given his people when they were living in exile in the Waikato.

Meanwhile in the early 1830's the first Europeans had begun to visit Mahurangi in order to procure spars of the Royal Navy. However there is no record of any of these people having visited Wenderholm. The first direct contacts between the Maori people of the district and Europeans were made when the Reverend Henry Williams and the C.M.S. catechists Messrs Fairburn and Shepherd visited the Mahurangi area in 1833. Over the next decade various C.M.S. missionaries visited the area on a regular basis and by the 1840's the local people had been converted to Christianity. Tauhia the local 'Rangatira' was baptised and took the Christian name 'Te Hemara' after James Hamlin the C.M.S. missionary. Ponui who lived at Puhoi and nearby Otarawao (Sullivan's Bay) was also baptised and took the Christian name Makaore or McQuarrie.

On April 13^{*} 1841 the whole coastline between Takapuna and Te Arai Point was sold to the Crown a part of the 'Mahurangi Purchase.' This sale, which included the Wenderholm area, was not made by the Mahurangi people but by the Hauraki tribes who claimed the land through their control of the area established in the late eighteenth century. Te Hemara and his people continued to occupy their land between Mahurangi Heads and Waiwera even though this land sale theoretically made them landless. The Crown made no attempt to remove them from the land and it was not until November 1853 that it moved to finalize the purchase. Te Hemara Tauhia petitioned Governor George Grey to reserve the Mahurangi area from sale. In particular he desired to keep Puhoi or what is now Wenderholm Regional Park, "as it contained the burial-place Mihirau... and on that ground the Governor granted his request." (The Peopling of the North S.P. Smith 1897 p.99).

A total of 6,691 acres was reserved for Te Hemara and his people and title to this land was confirmed in a hearing of the Native Land Court held at Robert Graham's 'Hot Springs' Hotel, Waiwera, on January 25, 1866. What is now the Wenderholm Regional Park was divided into three blocks including Te Akeake (9 acres), Maungatauhoro (70 acres) and a 280 acre part of the large Puhoi Block (2537 acres). Title to Maungatauhoro and Puhoi was granted to Te Hemara Tauhia on behalf of the tribe and Te Akeake to his relative Henare Winiata. It should be noted here that descendants of Maki from throughout the region had claims on this sacred place. They included Te Waatarauhi Tawhia the Kawerau Rangatira of Waitakere and Arama Karaka Te Haututu the Ngati Whatua Rangatira then living on the shores of the Kaipara at Waitangi.

The first European land purchase involving this land was made in May 1868 when a Scotsman Robert Graham (1820-1885) purchased the Maungatauhoro Block for 50 pounds sterling. Graham, known to the local Maori as 'Rapata Kereama', had purchased 20 acres beside Waiwera Beach for 16 pounds cash and trade goods from Te Hemara Tauhia and his people in June 1844. As early as 1848 he had constructed an accommodation house and established a 'bathhouse' utilising the 'Waiwerawera' hot springs, and this led to the development of the Waiwera Hotel.

In June 1863 the first shipload of Bohemian immigrants arrived at the Puhoi River mouth where they were welcomed ashore by Te Hemara and his people who then ferried them by canoe to their new home up the Puhoi River. Two further groups of Bohemian settlers arrived at Puhoi in 1866 and 1873. All of these people initially relied heavily on the Maori people living at the mouth of the Puhoi River who supplied them with meat, fruit, and vegetables until they had become established. This early kindness was never forgotten and relationships between the local Maori and the Puhoi settlers remained cordial throughout the nineteenth century.

Te Hemara sold several small sections beside the Puhoi River in 1870 and 1871 to William and Alexander Smith and George Ryan. Then after the death of Henare Winiata the small Te Akeake at the mouth of the Puhoi River was sold to Ryan in September 1873 as was the Orokarakā Block directly opposite. The remainder of what is now Wenderholm Regional Park was sold by Te Hemara to Robert Graham in three purchases made between September 1876 and August 1877 which meant that all of the Wenderholm land was now in European ownership. Significantly the last area sold was 'Mihirau' and it is probable that Robert Graham agreed to protect the sanctity of this sacred area which was never developed. Te Hemara and his people who had been living at Te Muri in the early 1870's, were now living in a kainga known as 'Te Rapa' on the north eastern edge of Graham's Wenderholm property. At this time they also often stayed with their Ngati Rongo relatives at Te Ruronga on the eastern shores of the Kaipara Harbour.

Robert Graham was one of Auckland's best known entrepreneurs and politicians, being active in provincial and national politics from 1855-1869. Graham was heavily involved in stock breeding, running large herds at Motutapu Island, Motuihe Island, 'Lambhill' (Waiuku) and also on his home property of 'Ellerslie'. He is, however, best remembered for his involvement in the hotel and tourist industry, in particular in association with the development of thermal spas at Rotorua, Wairakei and Waiwera. Graham purchased the Puhoi property as an extension of his Waiwera Hotel business operation although it was also used by him as a holiday home to escape the pressures of his business empire based in Auckland. Graham occupied 'Ellerslie' for most of the year, but spent the winter months at his Waiwera hot springs. It was for this reason that he named his residence 'Wenderholm' or 'Winter Home'.

Graham had a homestead built at Wenderholm and he carefully developed the property. The high tableland on Maungatauhoro was left in native forest although a clearing was made and a large orchard was planted there. Much of the flat land was sown in pasture and stables were constructed south of the homestead around which a number of exotic trees were planted including: a Moreton Bay fig, magnolias, holm and cork oaks, olives, walnuts, flame trees and Norfolk pines. Some of these trees are thought to have been gifts from Sir George Grey who occasionally visited Graham and Te Hemara at Puhoi. Graham also protected the few remaining pohutukawa on the foreshore from local shipbuilders who sought the timber. He then planted the pohutukawa grove which is such a distinctive feature of Wenderholm, and the largest planted grove of that species known in New Zealand (Burstall, 1971, p33).

By the late 1870's Waiwera had become a resort of both national and international acclaim and regular shipping services connected it with Auckland. Initially small sailing cutters had serviced the area but by the 1870's small steamers, such as the P.S. 'Effort' and later the S.S. 'Rose Casey', made regular visits to both Waiwera and Puhoi. On route up the Puhoi River they called at a small wharf located just inside the northern end of the Wenderholm sandspit, giving the property a regular link with the outside world. Although Wenderholm was

Graham's private domain it was run in conjunction with his 'Hot Springs' Hotel at Waiwera. Visitors to Waiwera were encouraged to cross to Kokoru using John Sullivan's 'ferry' service and to walk over the Wenderholm property. Here, they could swim at the southern end of the beach, take in the views from the pavilion on Maungatauhoro, fish, shoot birds, or visit Te Hemara's village at nearby Te Rapa.

In 1884 Te Hemara gifted his remaining Puhoi land interests to his wife Miriama Houkura and his nephew Te Hemara Te Huia. They in turn sold several small sections on the Puhoi River in 1886. In October 1891 Te Hemara Tauhia died and was taken by his Ngati Rongo relatives for burial at Te Ruronga on the shores of the Kaipara. In 1893, the remaining Maori land at Puhoi was sold to Joseph Schischka. At this time the descendants of Ngawhetu finally left their Puhoi home and settled elsewhere. Some moved to live with relatives on the Kaipara Harbour while a number moved to Awataha and Waiurutoa near Northcote. It was here that the historian George Graham collected much of the history relating to Mahurangi from Mereri a cousin of Te Hemara Tauhia. A section of Ngati Rongo, known as Ngati Ka, and some of the Waikato people remained in occupation of the remaining Maori land north of Te Muri Stream between Otarawao and Opahi.

Robert Graham's financial empire was in trouble by 1885 and he sold his Wenderholm land, excluding the Maungatauhoro Block, to a land agent Robert Greenwood. The land was then put up for auction as the 'Greenwood Estate' which also included the Te Muri land to the north. The Wenderholm homestead block was offered by Greenwood as one unit, although the flat sandy land north of the homestead was to be sold as twenty small blocks of between one and two acres, thus creating a small beach resort. This did not however eventuate, and the Wenderholm estate was sold in two pieces. A syndicate, which included Robert Graham, purchased the high portion of the land adjoining Maungatauhoro, while the homestead property and the flats were purchased in 1886 by Samuel Jagger (1840 - 1890). He was a well known Auckland brewer, hotel proprietor, and associate of Robert Graham. Graham died in 1885 and his interests in the property passed to the Waiwera Hotel Co. and his daughter Isabella. Samuel Jagger died in 1890, however he had sold his Wenderholm land to his brother Frank who was also a well known Auckland businessman.

The Wenderholm property has had four private owners since 1896 at which time Jagger sold his northern half of the land to Major John Whitney the founder of the Colonial Ammunition Company of Auckland. Whitney, an Auckland 'gentleman' retired to Wenderholm where he and his family lived there for over twenty years. The period of ownership by the Whitneys' is remembered as the 'golden era' of Wenderholm. They realigned the homestead and made numerous additions and alterations to the house. They added a small chapel as a music room and built many outbuildings to house a cook, house maid and gardener. The chapel, which was transported to Wenderholm by barge, is thought to have been the small church built by the Reverend Wiremu Pomare at Te Muri in c. 1872.

The Whitneys were well known for their love of animals and owned house cows, a few sheep, a number of horses, a donkey and dogs. Tame Kookaburras, originally gifted to Graham by Sir George Grey, used to come in and perch on the brass bedsteads. The Whitney family also planted a large number of pine trees to improve shelter on the flats. Countless friends and relatives spent many pleasurable hours with the Whitney family, swimming, fishing, boating, riding, playing tennis or lazing in the garden. By this time Wenderholm was still remote. Visitors still generally travelled to Wenderholm on the Puhoi steamer, although a few braved the long coach trip from Devonport. The isolation of Wenderholm was, however, broken somewhat when the Whitney's became the first subscribers connected to the Waiwera telephone exchange in 1911.

In 1911, Major Whitney purchased the remaining Wenderholm land from the Waiwera Co. Ltd. However, after the death of Mrs Whitney in 1919, the property was sold to a widow Mrs Anabella McKail Geddes. Her family ran cattle and pigs, but like the previous owners used the property as a holiday home. The McKail Geddes family travelled to Puhoi on the steamer 'Paroto', and on occasions drove to the property in a motor vehicle equipped with chains to

cope with the main road which then had a clay surface. After nine years of ownership the McKail Geddes family sold Wenderholm to Captain Thomas Caradoc Kerry an 'Auckland gentleman' who retired to the property. Captain Kerry was a colourful character who had experienced numerous adventures while operating as a Pacific Island trader specialising in the pearl trade and later guano mining.

Captain Kerry remained living at Wenderholm until ill health compelled him to move to Auckland where he died in 1944. The Wenderholm property had, however, been purchased by an Auckland merchant Mr Herbert Couldrey in 1944, with title being transferred in 1948. The Couldrey family association with Wenderholm was to become the longest of any of the owners of the property subsequent to its purchase by Robert Graham in the mid nineteenth century. The Couldreys undertook several important developments at Wenderholm, and entertained a remarkable number of distinguished guests. Their most enduring developments concerned the restoration of the homestead and the construction of several other dwellings, however the family also developed Wenderholm's farming potential running a flock of 200 breeding ewes and a herd of 30 beef cattle which were managed by local resident Mr T W Bayer. They also retained the property's remaining indigenous forest remnants.

During World War II, the Coastwatchers had a small camp near the cliff's edge adjacent to Mihirau Kakaha Pa on the headland.

By the late 1940's 'Wenderholm House' was in a state of disrepair and the Couldrey family built a small bungalow behind the beach for use as a holiday home. In December 1953 a notable day in Wenderholm's history occurred when Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip spent a day picnicking there. A cottage, which was to become known as the "Queen's Cottage", was specially built beside the Couldrey bungalow for the comfort of these honoured guests during their brief visit. In February and March 1957, two other distinguished guests holidayed at Wenderholm. Sir Anthony Eden, a former British Prime Minister, and his wife Lady Eden occupied the bungalow while Sir Anthony recovered from an illness.

During their visit Sir Anthony and Lady Eden had urged the preservation of the old Wenderholm homestead. To their credit, the Couldrey family responded to this challenge and immediately began the difficult task of restoring the ninety year old building. Between 1957 and 1960, the homestead was reblocked, strengthened structurally with the addition of a third gable roof, and thoroughly redecorated. On the completion of the renovation the first dinner guests to be entertained at the Wenderholm homestead were the then Governor General Lord Cobham and his wife Lady Cobham.

In 1962, the Auckland Regional Planning Authority proposed the establishment of a network of Regional Parks and planning staff had identified a number of potential sites. Among the properties identified for acquisition was Wenderholm. In 1963, the Couldrey family had, however, prepared a subdivision plan for Wenderholm and had received approval for the Waitemata County Council to proceed with its development. In 1963, the newly established ARA appealed the subdivision planning approval and entered into negotiations with the Couldrey family to purchase the property. The purchase of Wenderholm was approved by the Authority in October 1964 and possession of what was to be Auckland's first Regional Park was taken on 31 March 1965. As a condition of the purchase the Couldrey family were to retain the homestead, a 15 acre block surrounding it, and a small boat landing beside the Puhoi River.

The development of Wenderholm Regional Park began immediately under the supervision of Mr J W McPherson, the ACC Director of Parks. In May 1965 the first Wenderholm Caretaker (later Superintendent) was appointed. He was Mr Joe Kilmore, a man with a distinguished military record and holder of the Coronation Medal. In the first year, efforts were focused on preparing the Park to receive its first visitors in the 1965-66 summer. The access road was reformed and several parking areas were created. Dressing sheds and conveniences were constructed and the water supply was improved. The property was boundary fenced, amenity planting was carried out around picnic areas, and a 'tea kiosk' was

also constructed. This facility was initially operated by Mrs Kilmore and then from 1970 by a series of concessionaires, including Waiwera resident Mrs M Billman who produced the booklet "Wenderholm".

Wenderholm Regional Park was officially opened by the Hon. W J Scott, Minister of Marine and M.P. for Rodney on Saturday 18 December 1965, after brief addresses by ARA Deputy Chairman, Mr H Lambie, and Chairman of the ARA Regional Reserves Committee Mr A R Turner. Wenderholm proved to be immensely popular, with 41,000 people visiting it in the first six weeks after opening day. The development of the property continued during the late 1960's and early 1970's. Work centred on: improving the access road and parking, track formation, tree planting, and the installation of erosion control works on the sandspit. In 1967, a boat ramp was constructed to the north of the main parkig area to give access to the Puhoi River. This facility, which was installed at the request of local residents and Rodney County, has become one of the most heavily used boat ramps in the Region with its use during peak periods being one of the Park's key management issues.

In 1973, the ARA purchased the Wenderholm homestead and the adjoining 15 acre property from the Couldrey family. At this time the Regional Parks Committee made the decision to completely restore the homestead which was renamed 'Couldrey House' in acknowledgement of the Couldrey family's efforts to preserve and restore it from 1957. The Couldrey family graciously left a significant amount of colonial furniture and other items of historical interest in the house, including a greenstone adze found in the Puhoi River. The restoration of Couldrey House was carried out between 1973 and 1977 by a resident building contractor, Mr H Larsen, working under the supervision of the NZHPT Advisory Architect, Mr J Stacpoole. During this period the homestead gardens were also restored by Mrs Larsen with help from parks staff and volunteers. Couldrey House was opened as a museum in 1981 and from 1990 it has been managed by the 'Friends of Couldrey House' under the chairmanship of Mr H 'Tim' Couldrey.

In the 1980's the development of Wenderholm Regional Park continued, with important work in this period including: the improvement of staff accommodation, the extension of the kiosk verandah, the planting of thousands of native trees; and in 1986 the installation of a 'memorial seat' honouring those who had played a leading role in the first 21 years of development of the Regional Parks Network. While the recreational value of Wenderholm provided the main focus for the management of the park during the first two decades, the conservation of its ecological values has been given greater emphasis in the last decade. During this period, possum control programmes have been intensified, and Wenderholm has become the focus of an important pilot study undertaken by the DSIR, and later DOC and Auckland University, into kereru breeding patterns and rat control.

Wenderholm, which was the first of Auckland's Regional Parks to be opened, is still one of the most popular areas of open space in the Region. It is treasured for its ease of access, and in particular for its unique combination of historical, ecological and recreational and landscape values. The Park is now managed by a permanent staff of 3 who cater for the needs of 350,000 day visitors per year.

ARCHAEOLOGY

(Detailed archaeological site records are available from the New Zealand Archaeological Association filekeeper, C/- Department of Conservation).

The numerous archaeological sites of Wenderholm Regional Park represent the physical remnants of its vibrant history.

Early surveys of archaeological sites at Wenderholm Regional Park were undertaken by Wynne Spring-Rice and Lady Aileen Fox in the late 1970's. Dr Bruce Hayward also noted sites at this time. The results of these surveys are recorded by Bulmer (1981a) who lists 31 sites. Site record forms are presented in Bulmer (1981b). Mangan (1988, p.1) noted that "at

January 1982, the records of the New Zealand Archaeological Association indicated a total of 29 known archaeological and historic sites within the park - a reflection of the long and varied history of both European and Maori occupation". Mangan resurveyed these sites whilst assessing the nature and effectiveness of the management of archaeological resources at Wenderholm.

Mangan was unable to relocate six of the midden sites and reported that all but 1 of the remaining sites were in the expected condition. Site R10/167, consisting of 10 pits, 7 terraces and 3 middens had been seriously damaged by stock. Steps were immediately taken to remove stock from this site.

The 29 sites to which Mangan (1988) referred included the very significant pa on the headland, a waahi tapu on the sandspit, 10 sites with pits and/or terraces, and numerous midden sites. There are also sites of European structures and historic Couldrey House with its garden and notable trees.

Most of the headland sites are now under forest cover, but there are some good examples of storage pits and terraces in particular. The pa, the most important one in the district, was located near the existing lookout. Pits and terracing occurred on the slopes of the headland. There were extensive areas, particularly on the sandspit where food was processed: these are now marked by middens containing shellfish species found alive on the park foreshore today. Pipi shells are abundant in the midden with cockles being common. Tuatua are absent.

The Maori village, occupied after European contact, was located on the flats at the western end of the park.