

HE KĀKAHU REREHUA

THE UPLIFTING WIND

TE AHO TAPU
TE AHO MUTUNGA KORE
TE AHO MARAMA

THE SACRED THREAD
THE ETERNAL THREAD
THE KNOWLEDGE THREAD

Unfurling the wings of majestic Māori garments cared for by Tairāwhiti Museum

Beginning October 1st

He tino tāonga ngā kākahu ā te māori, e rerehua ana, e raranga ana, e whatu ana, kia whakaata ōna Tū hononga kōrero, Tū hononga whenua, Tū hononga tangata.

Whakamaua kia ita

Ita, mau tonu.

He Kākahu Rerehua | The Uplifting Wind weaves together an exhibition; collection care project and wānanga in one space. Each strand of this kaupapa will honour the different dimensions of a kākahu: the materials, the process of its creation, the life it has led and the people it is connected to.

The gallery will showcase a selection of kākahu (Māori garments), and the story of transformation from raw materials to taonga tuku iho (treasures handed down from the ancestors) through the skill, knowledge and ingenuity of the weaver. Though many of their names are not known, we celebrate their creativity and talent and the gifts of whatu and raranga (finger twining and weaving) handed down to us.

He Kākahu Rerehua also invites whānau to strengthen their connections to their taonga – spending time together and sharing histories and knowledge of individual kākahu, ensuring these stories are retained and the responsibilities of guardianship of these intergenerational taonga are upheld. Weavers, researchers, and other experts will also be invited to bring their insight in support of this kaupapa so we can build new knowledge about these garments through a public wānanga programme.

The kākahu at the museum are some of the most significant, but also highest risk collections held at the museum on behalf of the Tairāwhiti community, due to their size and fragility. The museum currently cares for 60 kākahu, woven with both traditional and contemporary materials. The oldest kākahu dates to the 1830s and the most recent was made in 2012.

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In He Kākahu Rerehua museum staff will carefully rehouse these taonga in new bespoke storage units to help protect them and ensure their survival for future generations. Staff will also undertake condition assessments, research, photography and update museum records which will improve public access (including digital access) to these taonga in the future. In undertaking this work in the gallery space we have intentionally blurred some of the boundaries between the museum's public and work spaces – and we hope to provide deeper insight in to the work undertaken, often behind-the-scenes, to care for and make the museum's heritage collections accessible to the public.

Foremost, He Kākahu Rerehua is for the kākahu; to unfurl their wings and be uplifted in a new wind.

We look forward to sharing in He Kākahu Rerehua alongside whānau, weavers and visitors of all ages as we celebrate these wonderful garments, and write another chapter in their journeys.

He Kākahu Rerehua will take place in the Jack C Richards Gallery at Tairāwhiti Museum.

The gallery will be closed to the public Monday – Wednesday for collection care activities and whānau visits and will be open to the public for the rest of the week for everyone to enjoy and learn in the exhibition.

An ongoing programme of wānanga will also run as part of He Kākahu Rerehua. The museum will host kairōranga (weavers) to share their expertise from all areas of this kaupapa; from engaging with te taiao (the environment) and ecological restoration, to master weavers sharing their whakapapa kōrero (intergenerational knowledge) in Te Whare Pora (the House of Weaving).

We are grateful to everyone who is supporting He Kākahu Rerehua, particularly those families who have entrusted the museum with the care of their kākahu over many years.

He Kākahu Rerehua is supported by the Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage Te Tahua Whakamarohi i te Rāngai Ahurea Cultural Sector Regeneration Fund

Follow Tairāwhiti Kaitiaki Māori Facebook and Instagram pages for updates and ongoing events. For enquiries please contact Taharakau Stewart, Kaitiaki Māori tstewart@tairawhitimuseum.org.nz; 06 867 3832