



Te Whanganui A Hei (The Great Bay of Hei)

MERCURY BAY

GUIDED BY THE STARS,
GREAT NAVIGATORS HAVE FOUND
MERCURY BAY ON THE COROMANDEL

STAYED TO EXPLORE
TO FORM RELATIONSHIPS WITH
THE LAND AND PEOPLE.

250 YEARS ON,
WE CELEBRATE
THE NAVIGATORS AND EXPLORERS,
AND THE SPIRIT WITH WHICH THEY
WERE RECEIVED.

OUR STORY

November 2019 is the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's visit to Te Whanganui a Hei on his first Great Voyage (1768–1771) aboard *Endeavour*. Cook's landing at Te Whanganui A Hei was the first amicable contact between Europeans and the Maori. Cook spent 12 days here with Ngāti Hei and named the area Mercury Bay.

The 250th anniversary is your chance to discover – and participate in – our story.

BEGINNINGS...

Long before Cook's arrival, Te Whanganui a Hei attracted another legendary navigator, Kupe. Kupe sailed here around 950AD from the mythical Polynesian Islands called Hawaiiiki.

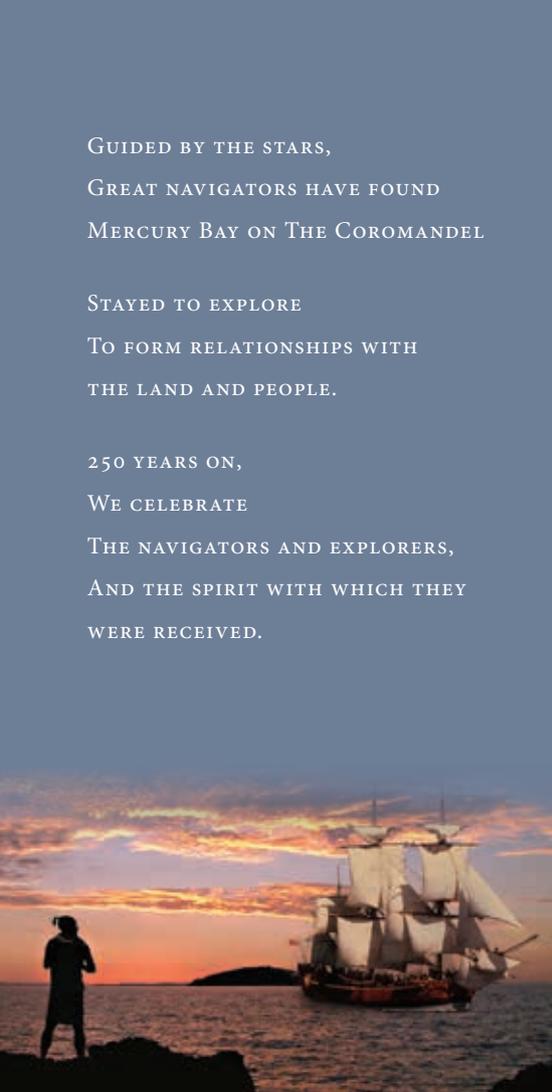
His journey was followed by the Te Arawa canoe under its *tauirā* or sailing master Hei – ancestor of the Ngāti Hei people who still reside in Whitianga today.

Although the Treaty of Waitangi was symbolically conceived at Waitangi, the actual birthplace of New Zealand took place at Ngāti Hei's turangawaewae – Wharekaho, in the Mercury Bay.

THE MERCURY BAY 250 TRUST AIMS:

The Mercury 250 Anniversary Trust was established to help our community develop events and lasting legacies that commemorate the significance of Mercury Bay in our dual heritage.

This is an opportunity to share our stories, embrace our dual heritage and enhance the indigenous marine and land habitats that were impacted following these first connections between two cultures.



FIRST ENCOUNTERS

It was at Wharekaho just north of Whitianga that the first sanctioned powhiri (welcome ceremony) occurred between European and Maori. There was the first recorded wero (challenge ritual) and a demonstration of Ngāti Hei's traditional weapons. Mercury Bay was where the first meaningful, friendly, inter-civilisation and cultural exchange took place.

SHARE

Cook and Coromandel Peninsula tribes made the first official exchanges of gifts which included the introduction of the potato, hence the name of Ngāti Hei's sacred Pa and urupa *Wharetaewa* or "house of the potato". Through the 250th anniversary we celebrate brave relationships forged: the opening of one's heart to engage with a culture different from one's own.



NAVIGATE

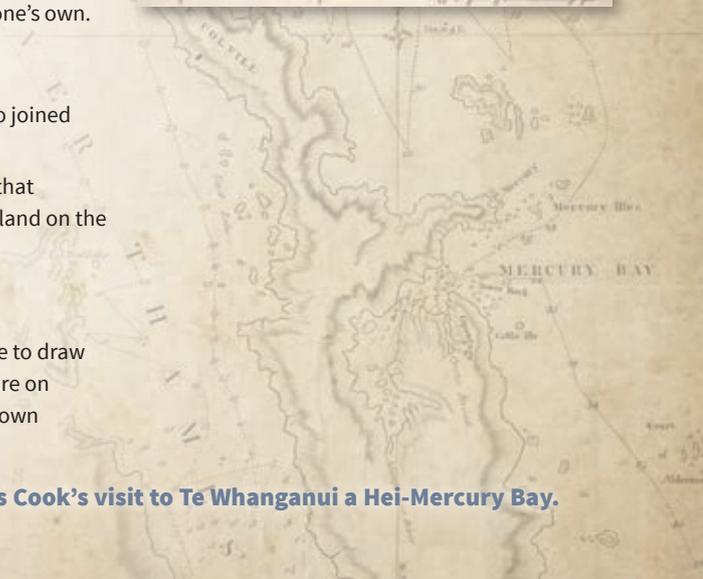
Mercury Bay has a long association with great navigators including Tupaia who joined with Cook on *Endeavour* in Tahiti.

At Cook's Beach, Cook recorded the Transit of Mercury – an astrological event that established the geographic co-ordinates of New Zealand. This placed New Zealand on the world map and gave Mercury Bay its name.

EXPLORE

Many scientific discoveries were made with these first encounters. We continue to draw visitors in the act of searching; for knowledge, peace and peaceful time in nature on The Coromandel where they can explore the region and the fulfilment of their own personal journeys.

Join us and contribute to the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's visit to Te Whanganui a Hei-Mercury Bay.





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