

To share the
abundance of love

**Whakapapa Research
Project series: Whāngai**



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Whakapapa Research Project series

This is part of a series of writings from eight whānau researchers on nine kaupapa. This kaupapa is about whāngai.

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Research kaupapa

Aspirational letter to future generations

Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) and whakapapa

Kai

Matriarch

Research methodology and methods

Whānau event

Whāngai

Whenua

Taonga



He kupu whakaūpoko: Introduction



Back from left: Elisha Pixie Tuuta (née Maxwell) with her mother, Annie Ngāwhakaangi Maxwell (née Ransfield).
Front: Children of Annie and Harry Maxwell. Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau.

The practice of whāngai is very rich within my father's whānau. To truly understand the various shapes, forms, and intergenerational practices of whāngai within my whānau, I will begin with my great-grandmother, Annie Ngāwhakaangi Ransfield (Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Raukawa), and my great-grandfather, Te Keepa Tuuta (Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Haumia). Kui Annie is my father's maternal grandmother and Koro Te Keepa is my father's paternal grandfather.

Annie and Te Keepa were both born on Wharekauri. Annie is the daughter of Taniera (Daniel) Ransfield (Ngāti Raukawa) and Pikiraukura Hough (Ngāti Mutunga). Te Keepa is the son of Tuta Tūtere (Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Haumia) and Pare Hough (Ngāti Mutunga). Pikiraukura and Pare were half sisters. Annie and Te Keepa were brought back to Urenui, Taranaki, as young children by their grand-uncle, Tahana Kawhe, and were raised by Te Kapinga McClutchie and others at the homestead located near Mimitangiatua awa. These arrangements were centered on maintaining the connections between Wharekauri and Urenui.

To share the abundance of love

Annie married Harry Te Meera Maxwell (Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Maru, Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangī, Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki) and had many children. One of their children was my father's mother, Elisha Pixie Maxwell, who was born on 1 April 1932. Harry is the son of Tāmaki Maxwell and Rāhera Tōpine. It is through Rāhera that I obtain my Ngāti Maru and Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangī whakapapa through Rāhera's father Topine Paekawa.



Mahere Kura Tuuta née Conroy and Te Keepa Tuuta. Photograph courtesy of the Tuuta whānau.

Te Keepa married Mahere Kura Tuuta née Conroy (Ngāti Haupoto, Taranaki Iwi) and had many children. This was an arranged marriage, which sought to reaffirm and solidify connections with Taranaki Iwi. One of their children was my father's father, William (Bill) Gordon Tuuta (Ngāti Mutunga, Taranaki Iwi), born 14 February 1930. It is through Mahere that I have whakapapa to Ngāti Haupoto, a hapū of Taranaki Iwi.





William and Elisha Tuuta née Maxwell (centre) with bridal party at their wedding. 8 November 1952.
Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau.



Elisha Tuuta née Maxwell on her wedding day. 8 November 1952.
Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell- Tuuta whānau.

Elisha married William (Bill) on 8 November 1952 at Urenui Pā. However, prior to this marriage, Elisha gave birth to her first child, Robert Maxwell, on 13 August 1951 in Waitara, Taranaki. Having children outside of wedlock was looked down upon at that time. Robert was given to Elisha's parents, Annie and Harry, from birth, to be raised as a whāngai. Since he could remember, Robert has always known who his biological mother, sisters, and brother were: "Mum [Annie] would say that she was my grandmother and that Dad [Harry] was my grandfather". However, for Robert, they were his parents: "Whenever I would introduce Mum and Dad to people, I would always say that they were my mother and father, as well as my grandparents".



Robert Maxwell (eldest child of Elisha Tuuta née Maxwell). Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell whānau.

Elisha and Bill had nine children: Kayleen, Pauline, Robyn, Mahere, Deborah, Gordon, Karen, Tracey, and Dana. Kayleen recalls the many visits as a child to her grandparents' home. Kayleen remembers one visit, when her and her sister, Pauline, were being chased by Robert. Wally Te Wake, an uncle that was living with Kui Annie and Koro Harry at the time, yelled out, saying to Robert not to hurt his sisters. On their return trip home to Urenui, Kayleen asked her mother if Robert was their brother. Her mother confirmed he was.



Wedding of Robert Maxwell and Margaret Maxwell née Herbert. Left to right: Robyn, Karen, Mark (partner of Robyn), Deborah, Gordon, Tracey, Margaret, Debra (wife of Gordon), Robert, Elisha, Mahere, William, Raymond (husband of Karen). Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau

The first of Elisha and Bill's children to be a whāngai was their third eldest child. Robyn Anne Farley was born 30 July 1955 and was given to Bill's sister, Ina Farley (née Tuuta), and her husband, Peter Farley. Ina was unable to have children. The decision around Robyn being a whāngai was made by her biological and whāngai father, during a meeting at the local pub with a toss of a coin.

Robyn did not know she was a whāngai until she was the age of 13. This was due to her having to attend a court hearing where her whāngai parents were going through the process to legally adopt her. It was at this stage that Robyn had been made aware of her biological parents. Although Robyn wasn't raised by her biological parents, she knows that Bill was a kind-hearted man, and giving her away showed the love he had for his sister. Robyn gave birth to her first child, Bryce Farley, on 19 January 1975 and he was given to Snow and Harriet Turner at 9 months as a whāngai. Harriet is a sister to Bill and Ina.



Left to right: Pauline, Dana, Robyn. Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau.

The pōtiki of my father's siblings, Dana, was also a whāngai. Born on 12 October 1970, Dana was given to Michael Wallace and Tahiti (Bundy) Waerea. Kayleen recalls Michael and Bundy asking for the previous child her mother (Elisha) was pregnant with at the time, this being Tracey. However, the whānau said no. When Michael and Bundy heard the news that Elisha was pregnant a few years later, they approached the whānau again to ask if they could have the child she was expecting, which the whānau agreed to. Kayleen was also pregnant with her first child, Anita, when her mother was pregnant with Dana.



Nanny Elisha with her mokopuna. From left to right: Andrea, Bryce, Melissa.

Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau.

Although Bill and Elisha had given children as whāngai, they were also parents of whāngai, their grandchildren Kelly Ann Tuuta (eldest daughter of Pauline) and Jamie Grant Daniel Tuuta (eldest son of Mahere). Both Kelly and Jamie were raised at the homestead known as 'The Farm' in Urenui, along with their first cousins Anita, Sheralene, and Moanaroa (daughters of Kayleen), and Andrea and Melissa (daughters of Deborah). Bill provided a father figure and was referred to as 'Dad' by Anita, Sheralene, Kelly, Moanaroa, Jamie, Andrea, and Melissa. Although there were many whānau living at the farm, the modest three-bedroom home provided a warm and loving environment for our whānau.





Left to right: Jamie, Kelly, Kayleen, Deborah, Karen, William, Mahere, Tracey, Pauline.
Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau.

April 1987 was a tough time for Koro Bill and my Tuuta whānau. During this month, Koro Bill lost his wife (Nanny Elisha) on 11 April, and 6 days later his only son, my father Gordon Raymond Tuuta, on 17 April. Both were victims of cancer. Despite the losses suffered, Koro Bill kept our whānau together and was the pou of our whānau. Koro Bill was reunited with Nanny Elisha and my father on 14 April 2001, and they are all interred together at our whānau urupā, Tautaratuhi, to the south side of Urenui Pā.



Left to right: Gordon, Raymond (in-law), William taken at 3 Elliot Street, Waitara.
Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau.

He kupu whakakapi: Conclusion

The many layers of whāngai within my whānau have provided a richness, a unique blueprint in our whakapapa. My uncle Robert, and aunts Robyn and Dana have dual whakapapa, derived through birth and whāngai lines. Being raised by his mother's parents from birth led to Robert being brought up as a younger brother to his mother's siblings. A flipped coin engagement between two men with the intent to give the gift of a child to a sister who couldn't conceive, resulted in Robyn remaining in the same generational line she had been born into biologically. However, unlike Robert and Robyn, Dana's whāngai whakapapa has seen her being given as a whāngai to a whānau beyond our immediate whānau, which has in turn strengthened the connections between two families of Ngāti Mutunga. Through their daughters, Pauline and Mahere, both Nanny Elisha and Koro Bill became whāngai parents to Kelly and Jamie along with many other mokopuna. This paper began by explaining the whāngai arrangements of Elisha's mother (Annie) and Bill's father (Te Keepa), which sought to keep connections between Wharekauri and Taranaki alive.

May the memories of our loved ones who have passed stay within our hearts and minds and continue to be spoken today and in the future: "Storms fade but love lasts forever".



Elisha Maxwell née Tuuta and William (Bill) Tuuta. Taken at Robert and Margaret Maxwell Wedding.
Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau.





TUUTA WHĀNAU REUNION, URENUI PĀ, 1990. Photograph courtesy of the Maxwell-Tuuta whānau.

Back left: Sheralene (mokopuna), Karen (daughter), Tracey (daughter), Kelly (whāngai to Bill and Elisha), Che Tamati, Mahere (daughter), Moanaroa (mokopuna), Andrea (mokopuna), Deborah (daughter), Raymond (mokopuna), Mark (in-law), Debra (in-law), Pauline (daughter), Kayleen (daughter), Dana (daughter – whāngai to Michael and Bundy Wallace), Robyn (daughter – whāngai to Ina and Peter Farley).

Front left: Nathan (mokopuna), Jamie (whāngai to Bill and Elisha), Melissa (mokopuna), Michael (mokopuna), William (Koro), Shanin (mokopuna), Wade (mokopuna), Jason (mokopuna), Simon (mokopuna), Tara (mokopuna), Rebecca (mokopuna).

Kuputaka: Glossary

Use of tuhutō (macrons): the introduction of macrons over some Māori vowels, have (1) clarified definitions and (2) made it easier to pronounce Māori words (i.e., knowing where to place the emphasis as you are saying the words). When we quote sources from earlier periods where macrons have not been used, we have not included the macron to remain true to the original text. In the glossary, we have included both versions of the word (with and without macrons).

awa	river
Koro	term of endearment for grandfather
Kui	term of endearment for grandmother
Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki	tribe of Tāmaki Makaurau
Ngāti Haumia	sub-tribe of Taranaki Iwi
Ngāti Haupoto	sub-tribe of Taranaki Iwi
Ngāti Maru	tribe of Taranaki
Ngāti Mutunga	tribe of Taranaki and Wharekauri (Chatham Islands)
Ngāti Raukawa	tribe of Waikato, Rangitīkei and Horowhenua
pā	fortified village
pōtiki	youngest sibling of a family
pou	pillar
Tāmaki Makaurau	Auckland
Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangī	tribe of Whanganui
Urenui	small settlement in north Taranaki
urupā	cemetery
whakapapa	genealogy
whānau	family
whāngai	Māori customary practice in which a child is raised by whānau other than their birth parents
Wharekauri	Chatham Islands