

What is a Powhiri?

Powhiri is a formal welcome ceremony by tangata whenua (Local People) to manuhiri (Visiting people).

1. Purpose, to determine if the visitors were friend / foe not so today.
2. Visitors were considered tapu (sacred) tapu lifted in the powhiri process called noa.( free, from all issues, new or historic ).
3. The process was one of honour and respectability.
  - a. Kaikaranga-(Call) – From the tangata whenua.
  - b. Whakaeke- Manuhiri prepare themselves.
  - c. They respond to karanga from the tangata whenua.
  - d. Whaikorero-Formal speeches are made by speakers from both sides, displaying knowledge of whakapapa (which is genealogy) ,spoken with mythological and metaphorical language.
  - e. The speakers would present links to those who had gone on before (ancestors) and links between locals and visitors.
  - f. The Kaupapa-The purpose of the event or hui stated.
  - g. Waiata Kinaki – Song is performed after each speech.
  - h. Koha- The conclusion of the Whaikorero, visitor will present a koha (gift)as an expression of thanks to the hosts for manaakitanga(hospitality).
  - i. Today koha is money in the past it was food or valued taonga (treasures).
  - j. Hariru / Hongi- At the conclusion of the powhiri the manuhiri (visitors) engage tangata whenua (locals) by shaking hands and gentle pressing of noses.
  - k. Kai / kapu ti-The sharing of kai (food)and cup of tea concludes the whaka-noa process, the final removal of tapu from the visitors. Tapu becomes noa.