

EXCLUSIVE



Sunset over Mt Wellington,
Spring Equinox, September 2008

AN UNPALATABLE TRUTH

The sun sets on the First New Zealanders

The new 'revised' history of New Zealand

We've all seen the documentaries and visual imagery is compelling. Whole new generations grow up with a picture of this land as pristine and pure, uninhabited until Polynesian footprints placed upon our shores. Before this belief continues any longer, we owe it to ourselves, and to the original ancestors of this land, to look at the facts. There were people here before the Polynesian migrations. They left behind multiple clues as outlined in the previous two parts of this series. They also left behind their bones – and these tell the most tragic tale of all. Far from pure and peaceful, the land now known as New Zealand was an unimaginable hell, awash in the blood of both the original peoples and Maori. Formal burials tell us about the First Peoples, but the bones of the ancient peoples can also be found under layers of charcoal, in the old cooking pits. Up until the 1970s, that early Maori were cannibals was common knowledge, though its extent and the horrifying effects on all the people of this country could not have been imagined. New Zealand's early history was openly outlined in books available to schools. Suddenly, books were withdrawn, a new 'revised' history appeared and the original, pre-Maori inhabitants disappeared from public view. This article allows them to speak again.

Maori have always spoken of a race of fair skinned people who preceded them. They called them "Patu-paiarehe" or Turehu, and some still trace a shared lineage. In 1867, a Ngati Whatua Tohunga (historian) stated that the Ngati Whatua came to New Zealand from the Cook Islands nine generations earlier, making landfall at a place called Hatarau (Little Barrier Island). Arriving there they encountered a race of fair haired people with fair skin and green blue eyes, whom they named PAKEHA. They took the women to breed from - the males as slaves and food.

There are Maori who speak of babies stolen long ago by a "fairy people" who hid in the bush, only coming out at night – an understandable action of people who were being killed and eaten faster than they could breed. It is also highly possible that children taken were born to their own women captured by Maori. In savage post-Maori New Zealand, captives were eaten immediately, kept for breeding or enslaved and subsequently killed for food – an unpalatable history to inherit, but a fact, nonetheless.



These tall bones and small Turehu bones were found just last month in a cooking pit.

One of the last surviving sub-tribes of the Patu-paiarehe was called the Ngati Hotu, pockets of whom survived into colonial times. Here's a description of them from Maori oral history: "Generally speaking, Ngati Hotu were of medium height and of light colouring. In the majority of cases they had reddish hair. They were referred to as urukehu. It is said that during the early stages of their occupation of Taupo they did not practice tattooing as later generations did, and were spoken of as te whanau a Rangi (the children of heaven) because of their fair skin. There were two distinct types. One had reddish skin, a round face, small eyes and thick protruding eyebrows. The other was the Turehu. They had white hair and blue green eyes. They were fair-skinned, much smaller in stature, with larger and very handsome features." (Refer: Tuwharetoa, Chpt.7, pg.115, by rev. John Grace). Note: The cavern dwellings and stone walls of these people can still be seen at Taupo, but are unprotected and under threat from development.

The bones of the first New Zealanders have been found at locations all over the country: A cache of bones was found in the Kaipara District in 2005 when a pig hunter's dog wandered into a cave. Investigations were handed over to Noel Hilliam, retired Curator of the Dargaville Maritime Museum, and his team of