

DID YOU
KNOW?

PŪKAKI



ROTORUA
museum
Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa
ART | CULTURE | HERITAGE

This large carved figure was made to remember a very important Te Arawa ancestor named Pūkaki, a chief of Ngāti Whakaue, a Māori iwi (tribe) from Rotorua.

Pūkaki was born on Mokoia Island but grew up at Parawai Pā near where the village of Ngongotahā now stands today.

Pūkaki is a notable chief because many people in Rotorua are descendants of him.

Pūkaki (the carving) was made by Te Taupua of Ngāti Whakaue in the early 1800s from totara from the Ngongotahā Stream.

In the carving he is shown holding his two sons Wharengaro and Rangitakuku, a part of his wife Ngāpuia can be seen between his legs.



WHERE IS PUKAKI TODAY?

Pūkaki is safely in storage and cared for by our museum staff. This is because the Rotorua Museum shut in 2016 in order to fix the building to make it safe in an earthquake. Over this time in storage many people have visited him as he is a very special treasure to the people of Rotorua.

FACTS

- Pūkaki originally stood as one of three gateways to Pukeroa Pā above Ōhinemutu in Rotorua
- The carving was cut down to the top figure by 1849, losing its legs and remained like this until they were reinstated when Pūkaki was placed in Rotorua Museum
- Master carver Lionel Grant was given the job to carve the new legs
- Pūkaki is a special taonga because it is looked after by a special trust which includes members appointed by the government, Ngāti Whakaue, Auckland Museum and the Rotorua Lakes Council



ROTORUA
LAKES COUNCIL



CHALLENGE

Pūkaki should be very familiar to New Zealanders. Find a NZ 20 cent coin and on one side is where you will find Pūkaki.



1. Using a piece of paper, crayon or pencil you can make a rubbing. To do this place the paper over the face of the coin and gently rub the tip until the design appears on your piece of paper.
2. Try this again with the 10 and 50 cent coins, and the \$1 and \$2 coins as well.
3. Who is the woman on the other side of these coins?
4. How is the side on which she is on the same on all the different coins? How are they different?



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