

TE HAPŪ O NGĀTI WHEKE – RĀPAKI

D88: 7Sleepers with Sista 7 Updated: 24 Pipiri 2005.

NGA PUKE KI RUNGA OHINETAHI / THE 7 SLEEPERS OF GOVERNORS BAY

Introduction:

The hills above Governors Bay are often known as the Seven Sleepers (or Sisters). Although some (4?) of those peaks have Māori names, there does not appear to be a record of 7 Māori names nor the equivalent of a collective Māori name for the ‘Range’.

Published references are as follows:

“Seven Sleepers. Seven prominent peaks at the head of Lyttelton Harbour.”

Gordon Ogilvie, Enjoying The Port Hills. 2000. p.181

“The seven prominent peaks round the head of the harbour from Coopers Knob to Mt Ada were referred to by Haast as the Seven Brothers in 1879, but have since been termed more picturesquely the Seven Sleepers.”..

Gordon Ogilvie, The Port Hills of Christchurch. 1991. p.216

“Seven Brothers”

HF Haast, Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast 1948. p.323 (of 1142).
Julius Von Haast, “Geology of Canterbury and Westland” 1879.
JC Andersen, Place-Names of Banks Peninsula. 1927 p. 193

“7 Sleepers: Mt Ada, Cass Peak, Lion Rock, Coopers [=4] and the Smaller ones [3] between..”

B. Baughan, L Cockayne and R. Speight, The Summit Road... 1914. p 13.

There is a strong suggestion that the name Seven Sisters or Brothers or Sleepers was given by early European residents who recalled classic European stories with such associations. The oldest of which would be known to Europeans with a classical education was The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, first recorded in the sixth century and several centuries later included in the most popular book of the later Middle Ages – the Golden Legend. The Ephesus story is also to be found in Islam’s Koran.

Ephesus is an ancient city about 50 kilometres south of Izmir (Smyrna), Turkey’s 3rd largest city (2 million people) on the west coast facing the Aegean Sea and the Greek island of Samos. According to the legend, Seven Christian youths of Ephesus fled persecution in about 250AD to a cave. The cave was walled up by their pursuers and they fell asleep.

Some 200 years later they awoke and one of them went into the city for provisions. After some adventures they fell asleep again, this time until the Resurrection. The story is one of many about how people react to the changes in the world. Fortunately the early settlers did not name the Governors Bay peaks after the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus: Maximillian, Jamblichos, Martin, John, Dionysios, Exakostodianos and Antoninos (or if you prefer the Gregory of Tours version: Achillides, Diomedes, Diogenus, Probatas, Stephanus, Sambatus and Quiriacus)!



Te Puāwai o Ngāi Tahu, the exhibition by twelve contemporary Ngāi Tahu artists to celebrate the Opening of Te Puāwai o Waiwhetu / Christchurch Art Gallery, May- October 2003, included *sista7* by Lonnie Hutchinson.

“.. *sista7* emerged out of Lonnie Hutchison’s lifelong fascination with stories – those legends and myths through which we come to understand communities and cultures. Because such accounts can change with every telling, they have an unpredictable evolving quality that particularly appeals to Hutchison: ‘what interests me most are the different interpretations by different orators’. Her subject in this work, created especially for Te Puāwai o Ngāi Tahu, is a group of prominent peaks on the undulating wall of the volcanic crater that forms Lyttelton Harbour. This wall, known generically as a caldera because of its resemblance to a Spanish cauldron, or cooking pot, dominates the view from Hutchison’s Lyttelton studio. Originally called ‘the seven brothers’, the peaks are now referred to as ‘the seven sleepers or ‘the seven sisters’. Hutchison considers this last description especially appropriate, given their monumental, almost magical, beauty: ‘I feel passionately fortunate that I make art in such an environment. For me this is a spiritual journey of returning to the landscape of my tipuna.’”

Felicity Milburn on Lonnie Hutchison in Te Puawai o Waiwhetu, Te Puāwai o Ngāi Tahu 2003 p56.

Te Ari Pitama (1906-1958) provided educational and entertainment programmes for listeners of Christchurch's 3YA and later 3ZB during the 1920s to 1940s. Amongst the entertaining love stories he wrote, probably during the 1930s, was a series on the love stories of Tutanekai.

This is No. 8 of a series of 19 stories under the title 'Melodies of Maoriland'.

THE SNOW MAID AND THE SEVEN SLEEPERS: PORT HILLS CHRISTCHURCH:

ANNOUNCER: In the days so far away when the world was very young and the Gods lived upon its breast the Sacred Mountain crests of the Isle of the Shaded Waters of the Greenstone were guarded by a Young Maori Chief, who with his six attendants roamed from end to end of the great mountain ranges watching for the canoes of the enemies of the people of the island. A great treasure lay hidden within the breast of the Earth Mother – a great green gem.

RECORD: POKAREKARE:

ANNOUNCER: Whilst the young Chief was listening to the songs of the tui and bellbird choir in the forest of Tane, a beautiful maiden joined him. Each day she came and the fires of Aroha burst forth into flame. One day whilst they roamed in the forest a fleet of canoes stealthily pulled in to the beach below and the enemy landed without the warning signal coming from the mountain tops. The Gods were angry that they should be disturbed and immediately turned the young chief and his six attendants into stone where they lay, the maiden had departed shortly before the anger of the Gods fell upon them, so when she came again she could not find her lover.

RECORD: WAIRANGI;

ANNOUNCER: As the maiden was the daughter of the Snow God, she went to her home in the Ten Heavens; once every year she roams the earth in search of the lover of long ago. In the height of a storm the Maori can hear her pleading call and songs of lament for him who lies with his attendants sleeping. The Maori of old knew the glistening maiden with her raven locks floating on the little breezes. He saw her going from sleeper to sleeper searching always searching. He saw her bewilderment and disappointment and the tears of crystal she wept for her lost lover. Hine-Taturua, the Snow Maiden, softly called upon the Gods to veil her grief, and immediately there came a thick blanket of dark cloud Children, followed by the thundering footsteps of the Gods themselves as they moved about the Ten Heavens. The Warriors of the Gods came forward in measured stamp of a mighty Haka to escort Hine-Taturua back to her ancestral home in the Ten Heavens. The Mist Children shielded the giant Warriors from sight, and later when the Sun-God Ra's bright rays revealed a thick cover of Sacred White Feathers of the Albatross, shaken from the clouds of the Hundred Chiefs of the Four Winds. For another year must the Snow Maiden search in vain for her lover.

RECORD: E HOTU NEI

MATARIKI

Matariki refers to the small cluster of seven stars (known to Europeans as Pleiades). Their appearance at dawn (or sometimes the first new moon after their appearance) marked the end of the old Māori year and the beginning of the new.

The seven stars were often regarded as a woman and her six daughters. Near the end of the Māori year, in mid-April, she was lost to sight in the west in the evening, then near the end of May she became visible in the east shortly before dawn.

The start of the new year was marked by Matariki's reappearance in the north-east before dawn – this direction and time being associated with light, life and well-being. The new year began close to the time of the shortest day, when the light was about to return.

Māori were very familiar with the stars and constellations. The point to the east of Rāpaki, Otūherekio, would provide a vantage point not only to observe the stars, but also to clearly see the hills to the west above Ohinetahi.

Topography:

Ingoa Māori	Pakeha name	elevation	Grid location
O-tu-tohu-kai	Marleys Hill	502m	805 328
?	Hoon Hay Hill	490m	806 319 ? 808 323 ?
O-tu-matua [?]	Mt Ada	467m	799 311
?	Rocky Knoll	500+m	799 311
Orongomai	Cass Peak	546m	797 301
?	[Lizzies Lookout ?] / Lion Rock	524m	799 291
Omawete	Coopers Knob	573m	797 274

Otūherekio
Rāpaki
Hōrongongoi 2005.