

The Ramanui family

By Wally Ramanui



Aoturoa Tamati Ramanui was born in 1868 in Whakatane. He moved from Te Teko to Mangatangi with his wife and six children about 1922.

Aoturoa Tamati's sister married a great Maaori chief named Te Kooti and Aoturoa was one of his few body guards.

He settled on a farm in Mangatangi now owned by Mr Henry Bros and Mr Edgar Smith, and later in 1927 moved across the road to the farm now owned by Graeme Yern.

Aoturoa had a family of seven children altogether, three dying before adulthood. The others were Peter Tamati, Joe Hokari, Annie and Mac Rotohiko. Annie and Mac both went to Mangatangi School.

My father, Joe Hokari Ramanui, born in 1906, took over the Monument Road farm from his father who died in 1961. He had nine children altogether - three from his first marriage and six from the second marriage. Many will remember his second wife, Polly.

My sister Joyce (Mrs Stephens) and myself remain from the first marriage, while Merleen (Mrs Karipa), Maewyn (Mrs Seymour), Glenda (Mrs Tuhoro), Gloria (Mrs Simmonds), Wayne and Lloyd Ramanui are from the second.

I took over the farm from my father after he passed away in 1962, and continued to farm until I sold it to Mr Yern in 1970. I live in Mangere with my three sons, twins Joseph and Riki, and Takawai. They all attended Dilworth School. My wife Charlotte passed away in 2015.

Rotohiko, known as Mac, lived with his brother Joe and family. He worked at the Cunningham Brothers coal mine in Kopuku for 21 years. Mac remembers as a small boy collecting kauri gum which was sold at a shop somewhere in the hills near the Findlay farm at Miranda. A profitable sideline, fetching 2/6 ~3/- a pound (25 to 30 cents).