



HERITAGE NEW ZEALAND
POUHERE TAONGA

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MEDIA RELEASE

History sheds light on maritime hazards in Bay of Islands

Boaties cruising the Bay of Islands should take a closer look at some of the place names recorded on maritime charts.

The stories behind some of these places can provide rich opportunities to learn from other people's past maritime disasters.

"One such place is the Brampton Bank – a large area of shallow water resulting from an ancient lava flow," says Heritage New Zealand's Northland Manager – and keen boatie – Bill Edwards.

"Brampton Bank is named after a nasty mishap which involved the ship *Brampton* running aground on the shallow unmarked reef in an easterly gale."

As it turned out, the shipwreck was probably one of the least dramatic in New Zealand's history. Some of the 28 passengers were taken off the wreck to the safety of nearby Moturoa Island, and Rev Samuel Marsden – who was on board the ship when it struck the rocks – sent word via a canoe to the missionaries at Hohi to summon help.

Marsden and others watched from their island refuge as the ship sat upright but fast on the reef. So blasé were some of the passengers on board, however, that they made no attempt to get off the wreck.

"That changed when the dragging on the rocks broke the bottom of the *Brampton*," says Bill.

"The remaining passengers were eventually taken to Rangihoua, near the Hohi mission, and Paihia, and all the baggage and cargo was safely unloaded over the following few days."

When the *Brampton* first arrived in the Bay some weeks earlier she had been carrying Henry and Marianne Williams who – under Marsden's pastoral eye – established the Anglican mission at Paihia in 1823.

When the *Brampton* sailed to leave for Sydney, however, Marsden was again on board, though this time accompanied by disgraced missionary Thomas Kendall. Kendall saw the shipwreck as divine intervention that he should stay in New Zealand.

Marsden saw things a little differently, though definitely saw the hand of Divine Providence. He later recorded his thoughts: "...*The vessel could not have been lost upon a more secure place for the safety of our lives and property than she was, and therefore we should be thankful to Divine goodness Who commands the stormy winds when they arise.*"

A new free app for Android and Apple smartphones and tablets produced by Heritage New Zealand, is now available telling stories about early interactions between Maori and Pakeha before the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi – a dynamic and colourful period of New Zealand’s history.

Entitled *Path to Nationhood*, the suite of six Northland tours – including a maritime tour for boaties cruising the Bay of Islands – is a must-have for visitors to Northland, as well as locals.

“The history of the Bay of Islands is gripping – and it’s particularly fascinating when places where events took place are viewed from the Bay,” says Bill.

“People who download the tour entitled *From the Sea*, for example, will be able to follow in the wake of explorers like Captain Cook and Marion du Fresne, and enjoy some really amazing yarns as well as maybe pick up some pointers on places where extra care is needed!”

Feedback from people who have already enjoyed some of the app tours has been overwhelmingly positive according to Bill.

“The tours make this incredible period of our history come alive, and tell these stories in an engaging and accessible way. Many of the stories also centre around some of our fantastic Heritage Destinations in Northland, so people can actually visit places where many of these people lived, and events took place,” he says.

“It’s fair to say that the app tours give people an opportunity to see history through new eyes.”

For a free download of the *Path to Nationhood* suite of Northland tours visit heritage.org.nz/apps or search for Heritage Trails through your online app store.