As the bus starts

Welcome to this part of our Reunion

I’m Kevin and with some fellow speakers, hope to share some information about our family.

During the day you are all most welcome to join in and take the microphone to add to our commentary.

The next stop for this Bus is at Opunake Beach.

My main Brief is to talk about William and James Honeyfield, these are the two brothers who married the two Barrett sisters.

However, since we will be going past some points of interest of their brother Henry, I will point these out now and later on today another speaker will tell you more about Henry.

Shortly, we will be driving past the Te Henui cemetery; most of the original Honeyfields are buried there.
If you go 100 meters through the gates there is a tree in a turnaround. Follow the ribbons to the left and you will come across the Honeyfield Plot. Well worth a visit.

As you turn on to Watson Street and approach the gates

Henry’s widow, Alice Brown Honeyfield donated many gifts to the city, including these gates to the Te Henui Cemetery.

point them out as you pass (on the left)
She also gifted the Honeyfield Fountain that we will pass later, and the Salt Water Childrens paddling pool at Kawaroa. The pool is still visible but deteriorated these days, however at the Honeyfield Display that is on at Puke Ariki, there is a fine photo of the pool being well used.

When the bus turns onto Eliot Street

Henry’s commercial interests started with establishing a Drapery business where that big white building is, (Point out the old State Insurance Building) he later bought Waterloo house on Devon Street, the oldest most established general store and drapery in New Plymouth.

Later he and his brother in law bought the Union Flour Mill and grew the business to incorporate a large warehouse where he traded in many farming stores and produce. We will pass this site later. Henry and his 1st wife Ellen lived alongside the mill.

We will pass these clear files around. They are a collection of old photos of sites we will pass. The union flour Mill and Henrys house is amongst them.

Going over the viaduct

Six Months after the death of his 1st wife, Henry married Alice, at St Marys church on Xmas day.

Over the years many Honeyfields have had a connection with St Marys. This church and Marsland Hill that is behind it, will come back in to our story later when we talk about the Maori Land wars.
Point out St Marys on the left as you approach it

As the bus turns down Robe Street

I will now move our story to the 1st of the Honeyfields to set foot on New Zealand soil. This was Harriet Matilda Honeyfield aged 25, 165 years ago. (16th Jan 1850)

As we turn down Brougham Street, look out to sea, this is where her ship, the Berkshire moored waiting for the smaller landing boats to bring the passengers to shore.

Her 1st night on land was at the Masonic Hotel, situated on the corner of Devon and Brougham Street.

Point out Sterling Sports corner of Devon & Brougham street when we turn onto Devon street. The site that the Masonic was on.

Her brother William had to wait a bit longer as an approaching storm meant the ship had to sail out to sea for a few days before all the remaining cargo and passengers could disembark.

William claimed the storm was worse than they had on the whole voyage. The poor cow that was still on-board could not stand for days afterwards.

Stop talking about the story, just point out Henrys mill and house site, the Honeyfield Fountain and the vicinity of the Salt water pools as we approach and pass these sites.

Once passed the fountain and you have pointed out the Pohutakawas at Kaweroa where the pools are resume the story

William with two cousins, the Morgan Brothers, (who had sailed with him and Harriet Matilda,) readily found short term work harvesting wheat and clearing fern. Then, after 3 weeks of arriving in Taranaki, they entered into a 12 month lease of the Peachtree farm. This was across the Waiwhakaiho river, but before the forbidden land past the Fitzroy Pole.

There were no bridges over the Waiwhakaiho in those days.

About 8 months into the lease, William and his two cousins purchased 50 acres at Omata. They paid by cash, putting 80 gold sovereigns on the table. The agent said it had been a long time since he had seen so much gold.

The farm had been foreclosed and buy paying in cash simply meant that the mortgagee and the mortgagor simply split the sovereigns to an exceptable level to both parties, scooped up there gold coins and went there merry way. Cash was king and made for simple business.

The Omata block was next door to where Harriet Matilda had settled, now married to John Newman. When the Peachtree farm lease expired, William and the Morgan cousins lived with John and Harriet, working the two Omata farms together.

In one year the value of the Omata rose from 80 pounds to 300 pounds.
The Morgans opted to sell their 2/3rds of the 50 acres to William for 200 pounds and used that money to purchase land at Tataraimaka.  

for 1 pound / acre.

A year later William sold his 50 acres at Omata, to John Newman, his brother in law, and followed his cousins, buying adjoining land to them at Tataraimaka.

William and his new wife Sarah lived with his cousins, as housing at the time in Tataraimaka was limited and primitive.

Sarah was 17 when she married, he was 19, and already on the 2nd farm he had owned.

It would also seem that he was keen to increase the Honeyfield presence in Taranaki, as their 1st child was born just 2 months after their wedding.

They did not stay long at Tataraimaka, and moved back to Moturoa to live in Dicky Barretts old house where the whaling station once was. It is here that William and Sarah settled to raise their family and farm the Barrett Reserve land.

Sarah was the youngest daughter of the late Dicky & Rawinia Barrett, and along with her sister Caroline, had inherited all the Barretts Reserve land.

We should point out that by now, brothers Henry and James had also arrived from England.

In 1864 William died from Typhus fever aged 31. He left Sarah and 5 children aged 4 months old up to an 11 year old.

After his death Sarah’s sister, Caroline, returned from working in the mission houses, and Williams brother James, came to offer Sarah help. 6 months later James aged 25 and Caroline aged 34 married.

As you approach Bayley Road

William was the 1st Honeyfield to be buried at the Te Henui Cementry, however the 1st Honeyfield to die in New Zealand was his 3rd child who is buried with her grandparents Richard & Rawinia Barrett at the Cemetery down Bayley Road.

Point out Bayley Road to the right and then the Old Honeyfield House and Pohutakawas to the left as you say the following:

We are about to pass one of the early Honeyfield Houses on our left and all the pohutukawas you see at Ngamotu Domain where planted by Honeyfields.

Continue talking as the Bus stops opposite the early settlers memorial.

It was here that in 1828, the 1st traders came, including Richard Barrett. Some were offered wives, Rawinia was to become Richards wife. She was the only grand daughter of Tautara, the paramount chief of all Te Ati awa, and with that came great respect.
Barrett was instrumental in securing land for The New Zealand Company and as a consequence was allocated Barretts Reserve A, the 57 acres that is between the Hongi Hongi Stream in front of us and Pioneer road behind us, which incidentally, used to be called Barretts Road, and Barrett Reserve C & D, another 170 acres which was 2 miles further up the road, often called the Barretts Lagoon Farm.

In the coming years, the right to this land was never questioned by Maori, the New Zealand Company or the Crown and as the two daughters of Richard and Rawinia married Honeyfields, the land soon came under Honeyfield occupancy.

In the clear file are some drawings and photos of this area including oil derricks, that paid 5% royalties, the Hotel that the family owned and some houses and farming sketches.

*The Waitapu cemetery down Bayley Road, fell into disrepair and it was William and Sarahs son John (William John) that managed to get it back from the crown and have at reinstated to its present form. He also planted all the pohutakawas you see on Ngamotu Domain.*

*For those of you who know where the Blagdon shops are, another of their sons ran a livery stable from there, Blagdon Farm, just 500 metres away.*

*Across the road is a monument to the early settlers, Barretts whaling station was just a bit further along and his house where William and Sarah raised their family was somewhere just in front of us up this road by the Hongi Hongi Lagoon that is now drained and buried.*

*The Otaka Pa site where James’s wife Caroline was born, and very close to where James and Caroline retired to is just behind us.*

………………………………………………………………………………………………

*Pause then start the story of The Battle of Waireka*

We are now going back 155 years to the day, the 28th March 1860.......To set the scene..... William & Sarah had 4 children, Henry had returned from England with his wife and with him another brother Edmund Honeyfield. Sister Hariett Matilda was 8 months pregnant with her 5th child, her husband John Newman and James had become members of the local militia.

*The militia was an organised force of 56 men to help protect the settlers in the absence of regular army. There was deep unrest between some Maori and Pakeha, John & Harietts farm house in Omata had already been burnt by the Maori, and news came in this morning, 155 years ago today, that two boys had been murdered by the hostile Maori, adding to the 3 men tomahawked to death the day before.*

The Militia and the newly formed Taranaki Rifle volunteers set of along this stretch of country we are about to drive now.

Their mission was to bring other settlers to safety, each man only had 30 rounds of ammunition. Edmund was not part of the Militia, but as a volunteer at the time, was likely alongside his brother James and brother in law John Newman. *Driver please continue.*

Get the driver to start driving again towards centennial Drive / Beach Road
A contingent of regular army had also been despatched inland towards the Omata Stockade, but unfortunatly had been given strict orders to be home by dark.

Anxiety was high in town, especially when gun fire could be heard from the direction of where the volunteers and Militia headed.

They had come across a large number of hostile, heavily armed Maori who attacked the Militia with all they had.

The regular army heard the gunfire and from the Omata Stockade, marched to 700 metres from the Maori aggressors, launching long range missile fire to assist the militia, however with orders to be home by dark they sounded the retreat horn and left the militia and volunteers to battle alone.

The militia where down to 1 round of ammunition each, and as day was turning to night, with no backup from the regular army, they expected a charge from the Maori at any time, their only defence would be bayonets against the still heavily armed Maori. They were not in a position to retreat, for they had dead and wounded amongst them and rough terrain to navigate.

Suddenly they heard from a short distance away, more gunshot and yelling followed by victory cries as the maori flags came down.

Tired and with little ammunition, the militia did not advance to join the assault on the Pa, instead carrying their wounded and dead, made their way cross country to the Omata Stockade in darkness. It was here that they learned that a 60 strong contingent of naval marines had stormed the Maori Pa and dealt with all the enemy that did not flee.

Point out Tataraimaka in the distance if you get a chance.

On the right.....Point out The Dow Enco Research farm...this is where the militia had barricaded themselves at the Jury farmhose.

On the left at about 11 oclock.....Point out the Omata Stockade......you only get a small chance to veiw.

As you get to the main road point out the subdivision you can see on Honeyfield Drive. This land was part of the Barrett Lagoon Farm.

Point out that between those new houses and the Omata Stockade is where Harriet and Johns farmhouse was that was burnt by the Maori.

Once on Highway 45 continue the story

Lets continue the story:
Back in the town, at Marsland Hill and St Marys church, spare a thought for 8 months pregnant Harriett Matilda, her husband and brothers went to try and bring back other settlors to safety, they were not looking for a full on engagement with the enemy.

She could hear the battle, but new no detail of what was happening.
The regular soldiers arrived back at dark as ordered......telling the families how they left the militia trapped and under heavy fire. Dismay and disbelief followed, then some hours later the Naval marines arrived, carrying the Maori flags and claiming victory, but they were unaware of the wellbeing of the militia. It was after midnight when the militia finally got into town and the families found out who were the casualties, and who was safe.

It is probable to say that if the naval marines did not show up, the battle of Waireka would of had a completely different outcome, and there would be no Tataraimaka or Patea Honeyfields alive today, as James and Edmund would of likely perished as single men 155 years ago today.

After the battle, many women and children were transported to Nelson. John also relocated his family to Nelson and become a publican for a few years before He and Harriet Matilda returned to their Omata farm when the unrest had settled.

James continued to see action in the Maori Land wars, but once married to Caroline he established a butchery business. It must have been successful as in 1869 one of his invoices was for 246 pounds owing to him from the crown. This was for supplying meat to the military. Later that year bought 446 acres at Tataraimaka for 1250 pounds.

Over the years he accumulated more land in the area to have one uninterrupted block of 1200 acres.

**As you past Okurakura**

James and Caroline had two daughters when they 1st moved to Tataraimaka, but for now I will talk about one of their daughter in laws, Ethel Morris, or Grandma Honeyfield as she was known to some on this bus, she become a very important figure in the Honeyfield family. She was married to one of Dicky Barretts grandchildren, but outlived all of Dicky & Rawinia's grandchildren, this left her as a trustee to close of all the loose ends of the Barretts Reserve legacy farms.

**On the of the Tapaue Hill**

The Norfolk pine in front of us is referred as the Morris family tree. The old Morris house is still there on the right and is where Grandma Honeyfield (Ethel Morris) grew up.

**Point out the house as we go past**

Also to the left is a dairy farm that was bought by Jim Honeyfield, one of her sons. This was around 65 years ago and the farm is still owned in partnership by his children.

**At the Oakura Bridge**

As we come into Oakura, hopefully to our left, at the garage you will see Grandma Honeyfield's 1936 Dodge.

*Apparently at the age of 60, after her husband died, Grandma Honeyfield decided she needed a car, learnt to drive and rumour has it that she become very forthright and exciting in her driving habits.*

The car is now owned by Ash Heydon, proprietor of the garage. His Late wife Nona was one of Ethels grandkids.
Once we leave Oakura

Ethels Husband, and James & Carolines 4th child was William, grandad to some on this bus, and not to be confused with James's brother "William", this is James's son we are now talking about, who married Ethel Morris.

The Honeyfields become very instrumental in developing dairying in the area. William, was the 1st chairman of the Dairy Factory you will see as we go through Ghost Valley. This Co-operative factory was preceded by private dairy companies that James had developed.

Not many people recognise the Tataraimaka corners with the name "ghost valley". The corners have been notorious for spin outs. The 1st ever car crash in Tataraimaka was by another of James's daughter in law......Charlie, the youngest son, bought his wife an Eedsal, one of the 1st cars in the district.

When she spunout at the Tatra corners she claimed a ghost had jumped out in front of her and hence the old name Ghost Valley.

Actually cars and Charlie didn’t really mix. Later on Charlie and his family moved up to Te Awamutu and Charlie was killed in a freak car explosion.

As we approach the Dairy Factory

To the left is the Dairy Factory that William was the 1st chairman, he remained chairman till his death 18 years later. William was also instrumental in getting the Tataraimaka Hall built.

Just before we turn down Lower Timaru Road

The side roads in Tataraimaka are narrower than the rest of Taranaki. This is because the land was surveyed and settled long before the confiscation of land following the land wars.

Just because the roads were surveyed early, does not mean they were formed.

It is well documented in the Roading Board reports how Charlie and William donated their bullocks and staff to prepare the road for metal and then they transported the hard stones free of charge.

Remember there were no tractors or hydraulics front end loaders then.

Passing the cemetery

William was the only Honeyfield to ever be buried in this cemetery on our left, his wife Ethel, and many of the later Tataraimaka Honeyfields are buried at Okato.

We now come across the 1200 acres once owned by James Honeyfield. Largely speaking it as all the land you see up to the high tide mark.

To the right of the Greenwood Road that is in front of us the original bit bought by auction in 1869, This is where William farmed, and to the left of Greenwood road is what was the Bank Farm that Charlie farmed until he left for Te Awamutu.
Once you have turned hard right down Lower Timaru Road

On arriving at Tataraimaka
James & Caroline did not have to clear heavy bush to farm.
Robert Greenwood, the previous owner did not have to clear heavy bush.
For many years before the European arrived, the maori had cultivated the land for Kumera and Taro, but due to conflict with northern tribes, abandoned the land and let it fallow for 30 years before the European settlers arrived.

It was then described as park like countryside with beautiful shrubbery.

This was easy land to cultivate compare to the heavy bush further down the coast and inland.

Once we past Kevin and Jackies letter box

All the houses you see from here where built by Honeyfields.
The Hill to our right was Fort Turner, the chimney you see below was a house destroyed by fire.
Two farm staff were occupying it at the time.......trust the good old farm staff.....luckily no one was hurt and William got the insurance.

As we turn up the Shipwreck subdivision right of way

The land either side of us now is what our Morgan cousins ploughed, 16 years before James bought it.

As we turn the corner of the right of way

Farming this land today is very much a continuation of what James started 5 generations ago.
James had to adapt to the markets of the day, from, sheep, beef, crops and planting shelter to establishing a dairy herd and processing his own milk.
When Jackie and Kevin, the current owners, 1st worked the land they had the task of tidying up after the previous four generations. Clearing the remains of old piggeries, rusting obsolete machinery, and the large Gum / Macrocapa and Pine tress that were aged and would fall at any time, and as brilliant as it has been to protect pasture and stock, they declared African Boxthorn a weed, pulling out what the 4 previous generations had planted.

When we are on our farm

The house with the red roof you see on our right is the House that was on the farm when James bought it, all going well we drive by it shortly.

When we cross the race

Wheat & Barley were successfully grown on this farm 100 years ago. Today, Barley is grown for whole crop cereal silage. The grain is loved by sparrows of which an annual cull is necessary.
It was James that introduced 4 sparrows to our farm 140 years ago. He paid 4 pennies / sparrow.

He also introduced the pheasant, the younger generations of these birds can still be seen from time to time.
One story reported in the paper says how James waddled out into the sea to retrieve one of his 1st peasants that had become disoriented. The event was witnessed and reported by a passing ship.
By the turn of the century in 1900, James had moved to Moturoa. His sons were all farming, William on the original farm, Charlie next door on the new Bank Farm, and Barrett, his oldest son at the Barrett Lagoon farm.

Point out Fort St George, formally the Tataraimaka Pa site

The Tataraimaka pa site was part of the Bank farm that James bought in 1897. Charlie sold the Bank Farm and moved to Te Awamutu around 1920.

William died in 1932, his wife Ethel, Grandma Honeyfield, continued living in the homestead for another 8 years. Then the 550 acres owned at the time was formally divided into 4 farms for 4 of their sons.

As time moved on, more land was sold as the family left Tataraimaka.

Today 240 acres is still owned and farmed by the family, including the original 150 year old Honeyfield Homestead.

As we approach the old house

This is where you are welcome to come tomorrow for the BYO lunch, Brunch, afternoon tea, whatever from 11:00am.

Bring your gumboots as you may be asked to help as we are 10 days into calving at the moment.

27 year old, Cheryl Honeyfield is the contract milker, the sixth generation to be a self employed farmer on this land.

As the bus goes down Greenwood Road

As mentioned earlier, bankruptcies where common. A large block of land had been managed by the National Bank, known as the Bank farm for many years until James bought the bulk of it in 1897. For many years later it was still known as the Bank Farm. One add in the 1907 paper read (“a public milking machine demonstration at C E Honeyfields, Bank Farm, Tataraimaka”).

Point out Charlies house site.

To the left is Charlies House site....where the Phohutakawas are.

As the bus approaches the corner at the bottom of the road.

The land either side of us was all James’s

At the bottom of the hill we will soon go down is an old cowshed. This is where a Flour Mill once stood that James converted to the 1st Butter factory in the area.

Pause a bit then say well before the top of the hill

In 1818, on the beach to our right, the Northern Maori turned up with two muskets. The local moari had never seen or heard of the musket before. Their chiefs were shot 1st and chaos and slaughter followed. They raided all the crops and it was from here that the land was left to fallow for 33 years before our Morgan cousins bought the 1st plough to Tataraimaka.
Point out the cowshed were the Butter Factory was

Once past the bridge

The Bush on the point in front of us is still called “The Crows Nest”, the nick name given by the soilders of Fort St George. Just past there on our right is the grave site of 20 plus Maoris that died in the battle of Katikara in 1863. 30 house had been burnt in this area prior to that battle and it was not until 1865 that the settlers returned to Tataraimaka. This is when new houses where built including the Old Honeyfield Homestead.

As you go through the bush at the crows nest

In 1914 Charlie Honeyfield donated the land on the right for a memorial of the fallen Maori in the 1863 battle.

_In that battle canon was fired from ships onto Johnnys flat you see to the right in the distance._

As you approach the row of Norfolk pines

At this row of Norfolk pines to our left is the boundary where the land the Honeyfields once owned finishes.

Pause for a minute and then say

We have talked about James and Carolines two youngest sons William and Charles. Their oldest son Barrett Honeyfield farmed the Barrett Lagoon farm, Barretts Reserve C & D. Barrett ended up leasing out the Barrett Lagoon farm and moved to Parnell. It was his son Murray that eventually inherited that Dicky Barrett farm to have in his own name.

James was very successful and you might think everything worked in his favour, however here is a reality check.

Octavia their eldest daughter married an Oakura farmer when she was 19. Thomas Johns, her husband, was declared bankrupt 6 months later, They moved to the Blagdon farm under the umbrella of the Honeyfield Family, but sadly, even with lots of children, Thomas Johns an alcoholic, had beaten up Octavia once two often and James paid him to go to Aussie and never return.

Octavia passed away as a 36 year old leaving her younger sister Sarah to raise her family.

Later James bought 100 acres at Bell Block for the Johns children to farm, their Auntie who had raised them, remained a spinster living with the Johns family until she finally returned to the Tataraimaka farm to die aged 65.

Also during the time that Thomas Johns was abusing his daughter, one of the nephews that he had tried to mentor following his brothers death was misappropriating funds that James had helped him in business with. After this nephews 2nd dodgy bankruptcy, he too went to Australia, and never returned.

As you approach Okato and the cemetery

Ethel (Grandma Honeyfield), and many of the Tataraimaka Honeyfields are buried here at the Okato cemetery.

Thank them for their attention and may be ask if there are any questions