

## ***'The Three Whales' Nga Tohora e toru.***

*Long, long ago a whale and her baby cruised into the harbour through the entrance past Maunganui and Matakana. They swam up the harbour past Te Papa and Matapihi toward Maungatapu. They found the water was getting shallower and they turned around to return to deeper water. Unfortunately, they turned in to the Rangataua arm of the harbour between Matapihi and Maungatapu. They knew which direction the ocean lay. They could hear the waves pounding on the beach at Omanu and Papamoa. They struggled over the mudflats of Rangataua, trying to find a way back to the open sea. They stopped at Karikari on the eastern shore of Rangataua. There was a spring there and they drank from it, because they were tired and thirsty. They did not know that this spring was magic. All life departed from the body of the mother whale and she was fixed there, gazing northward out to sea. The baby nestled beside his mother and was also fixed there as the smaller hill beside Mangatawa on the Papamoa side.*

*The father whale came into Tauranga Moana looking for his family, He followed them up the harbour and he to struggled across the Rangataua mudflats and drank at the spring at Karikari. He was also transformed into the high rounded hill south of Mangatawa that is called Kopukairoa.*

*There is still a spring at Karikari and it is called Te Waiu o te Tohora, the milk of the whale. It is at the base of Mangatawa near the shore of Rangataua. Sometimes the water flowing from it is quite white, so it must be the milk from the whale, which rests there as a guardian of the people of Te Arawa and Tauranga Moana.*

*Purakau sourced from:*

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