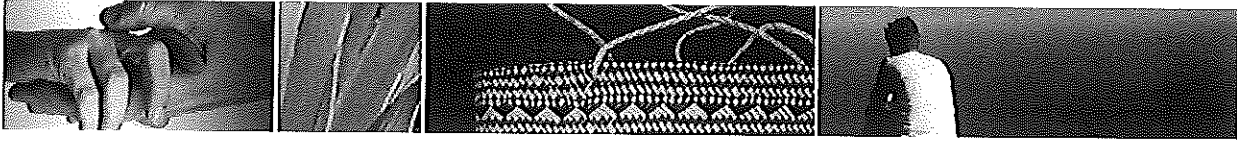


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Wednesday, 30 January 2013

## Counselling Today/Nga Korero Awhina Newsletter

### NZAC Life Member - Whaea Tuti Aranui written by Alastair Crocket



WhaeaTuti with fellow Life Member, Carol White at the 2012 AGM

## October 2012

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In July I was fortunate to join a large throng who assembled at Maniaroa marae at Mokau to celebrate Whaea Tuti's 80th birthday. The whareniui was packed for the powhiri and the wharekai was similarly packed for the haka and speeches.

From the speeches it was obvious that Whaea Tuti has also had a significant role in the work of language restoration across a wide area and with this language restoration came restoration of mana for many whanau. Speaker after speaker at her birthday spoke of their appreciation of Whaea Tuti's positive influence on their whanau. Some also spoke of her direct way of speaking!

Tuti Aranui was elected a Life Member of NZAC in 1992. At that time there were very few Maori active in NZAC and none who had the profile Tuti had. The Waikato members who nominated her valued her invitational leadership of non-Maori towards partnership with Maori and her clear articulation of a Maori perspective in counselling.

Whaea Tuti had trained at Waikato University in the mid 1980s to take up a role as a Guidance Counsellor at Pio Pio College in the King Country. She made it clear to her lecturer, Ted Wadsworth, that the programme had offered little of relevance to her in cultural terms. Characteristically, she then offered to facilitate annual marae noho for the Waikato counselling students. She maintained this commitment over more than two decades. I attended the first of these noho as a student in the programme and have clear memories of the impact that her leadership had for me.

At the 1993 AGM, Tuti asked for and received NZAC's support to establish an organization for Maori counsellors. It became known as Te Whanaki Tautoko. This group still exists and is expanding to include people who follow principles that are founded on Tikanga Maori.

I have worked with Tuti on planning committees for three NZAC conferences. While the Waikato NZAC branch prides itself on the partnership between branch and local Maori at these conferences, it was Whaea Tuti who opened the door to that partnership work and invited us to share in her world. The first of these three conferences was held at Papa o te Aroha marae in Tokoroa. The conference theme was chosen to match the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty. Tuti had a central role as conference facilitator.

Rosemary Barrett wrote:

*"My memory is of a woman who sat at the left of the doorway of the whareniui who seemed to be able to call us together, focus us, move us onwards through our conflicts, without apparent effort and with respect for the marae protocols." (2001, P.25)*

The 1999 conference was run in partnership with Te Whanaki Tautoko, the organization Whaea Tuti had called into being six years earlier. With the 2009 conference Whaea Tuti handed the practical partnership responsibilities to another generation of Maori counsellors and remained as their consultant.

Whaea Tuti has also played significant roles within the Maori roopu of NZAC. Within the roopu she holds one of the Tumulumu roles: she is one of the senior supports for Te Ahi Kaa. She was instrumental in establishing the role of Te Ahi Kaa and the kawa around this. I leave it for members of the Ropu to write more of her contribution there. The weekend immediately following her 80th birthday celebrations, Whaea Tuti travelled to Wellington for the NZAC AGM because there was business on the agenda that she wanted to speak to.

Whaea Tuti has offered much to NZAC both locally and nationally for over 25 years. For twenty years she has been a very active Life Member.

In 1990 she offered this whakatauki for our conference. It seems appropriate to close with it as it captures much of her philosophy.

'Nau te rourou, naku te rourou, ka ora te iwi'

'From my basket and your basket flows the wellspring for us all'.

Alastair Crocket

*Reference*

Barrett, R. (2001). 'From my basket and your basket flows the wellspring for all'. New Zealand Association of Counsellors Newsletter. 21(2). 2001 NZAC: Hamilton

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