

RONGOĀ SYMPOSIUM AND EXPO 2015



Te Kāhui Rongoā Trust
Final Report



Te Kāhui Rongoā Trust
RONGOĀ SYMPOSIUM AND EXPO
Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Tupoho, WHANGANUI
02 – 04 – Whiringa a Nuku 2015

FUNDING

Our Symposium was not without its challenges. As we all know there have been major changes in the last 2 years to the way Te Kāhui Rongoā Trust has been able to run any trust business which includes the ability to hold regular trustee meetings. Once the trust had been formed and Nga Ringa Whakahaere o te iwi Maori and Te Paepae Matua disestablished, the only avenue for funding to administer Te Kāhui Rongoā Trust business was the contestable MPDS funding. The first application submitted to the Ministry of Health was approved for approximately one third of the amount requested which effectively stopped the ability to fulfil our trust mission. This is of course **old news** but is still very relevant to the reason why a decision was made in January 2015 to actively pursue a Contemporary Treaty Claim to address the breaches pertaining specifically to Te Kāhui Rongoā and Rongoā Maori.

As we all know dealing with Treaty claims has taken a huge toll on whanau, hapū and iwi throughout the country. This claim is no different SO to balance the energy and instil a **positive note** into our Hui Taumata it was decided to make our hui this year a cause for celebration. **Celebrating the Diversity of Rongoā** was the ultimate purpose of our wānanga this year. Inviting and **informing** health professionals throughout Aotearoa of what Rongoā can and does offer our whanau, hapū, iwi and wider communities. Despite invitations being sent to all District Health Boards and various government departments and our own Maori Health providers throughout the country we failed miserably to attract enough registrations to cover costs. Two major funding applications were declined and the Natural Health Products Bill and the challenges this presented to our trust a month out from the date, almost prompted the cancellation of our hui.

If it were not for a very generous grant from Whakauae Research and a grant from Te Puni Kokiri (including pens and pads thanks) I would not be writing this report. *Kei te rere tonu nga mihi ki a koutou.* In reality though it was the constant reminders from our kaumātua, in particular Aunty Piki Waretini and Aunty Waahi Teki saying ‘the wairua will guide you dear’ that kept us on track. Thank goodness we listened. After paying all the accounts and making sure our kura was looked after we managed to come in approximately \$100.00 under budget. YAHOO!

Recommendation: That all Te Kāhui Rongoā trustees take responsibility to involve their local and/or regional health providers, especially those working with our whānau, hapū and iwi. This is an important part not only of our Strategic Alliance Plan but also of the Trust’s Communications Plan.

FRIDAY 2 Whiringa a Nuku

The pōwhiri was to welcome Te Kāhui Tāwharautanga mō ngā Rongoā; our trustees and rongoā whānau from the 10 rohe the trust represents. At 2.15pm although there were only 20 people at the gate waiting to come in *i tuku atu te karanga kia tīmata ai to tātou wānanga.* Sixty people answered the karanga and came through the doors. I have no idea where they were when we checked 5 minutes before but it was fantastic. I tae mai Te Upoko o Te Ika, Waiariki, Te Tau Ihu o te Waka o Maui, Te Tairawhiti, Taranaki, Ngāti Whātua ki Orakei and Waikato. Unfortunately some of our trustees were unable to attend at this particular time but that didn’t detract from the excitement and enjoyment of the moment.

Whakawhanaungatanga after our hākari allowed us all to connect a *tinana* and after *te kai o te po* everybody claimed their beds and prepared themselves for the Symposium and Expo the following day. Accommodation for our kaumātua was booked and paid for at the nearby Seaside Holiday Park and approximately 30 whanau stayed at the venue.

Recommendation: That Te Kāhui Rongoā Trustees take responsibility to inform rongoā whānau in their respective rohe and in turn inform the organisers of numbers attending and accommodation requirements at least 3weeks prior to the start of the wānanga. I have to giggle ... numbers will always change as close as 5 minutes before the pōwhiri☺ but a good recommendation nevertheless.

We were fortunate to have the Māori Wardens on site throughout the wānanga and they were magnificent and represented not only their organisation well but also *to tātou Awa Tupua. Tēnā rawa atu koutou katoa.*

SATURDAY 3 Whiringa a Nuku – programme attached

Venue: Matariki – Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Tupoho

The venue was excellent and ninety registrations on the day meant that we had a healthy 120 attendees throughout the Symposium. By hākari on Saturday evening we had 185 people on site including our entertainers and fabulous caterers, Hato Petera Hanera fundraising whānau and Māori wardens.

Our MC for the day was Adrian Te Patu who proved from the moment he opened his mouth that he knew without a doubt that laughter truly is the best medicine. What a wonderful way to start our symposium. Our speakers were confirmed and all present, power point presentations duly delivered to the IT team and the cameras were rolling on time @ 9.00am. We had no need to deviate from the attached programme and all speakers delivered their respective kōrero to a captivated audience. The main purpose for choosing the subjects was to show that Rongoā Maori is not only about traditional rongoā rākau. Rongoā truly is diverse and there are many facets that we need to understand to receive the full benefit of the taonga that our tupuna left for us all.

Dame Tariana Turia our Keynote Speaker acknowledged Rongoā and the many whānau who have contributed in our rohe over many years. A special thank you to Aunty Olive Bullock, Uncle George Waretini, Graham and Vicky Puru and Barry Pue. *Ahakoia kua tae ke atu koutou ki te wāhi kore mamae, kore mauui kei te tangi tonu ngā roimata aroha mō koutou katoa. He rama tonu koutou ma mātou te kaupapa tangata.*

Rongoā rākau - Pa McGowan presented yet another thought provoking korero ... *“The greatest damage done to Māori by colonisation is not the loss of power or land and its resources. It is loss of connection to the land, the whenua. Connection to the whenua is the foundation of Māori identity.”* It was great to have Pa back on the awa. He would be the first to admit that his extensive knowledge about the whenua and her bounty was born on the awa and nurtured by the kuia and whanau of the time to ensure that the integrity of the information remains intact. He reiterated how important it is that we monitor how and what rongoā is being harvested. Too many times he has witnessed the destruction of a valuable resource through ignorance and greed. Identifying the correct plant to harvest is crucial. He is currently travelling throughout Aotearoa giving whānau the opportunity to reconnect with the land and learn how to listen *kia taea e tātou te rongo!*

Mirimiri a Hinengaro - The energy emanating from the next presentation was palpable. Debs Rewiri is passionate about reaching and teaching as many whānau as possible. Educating whānau about how and why the first three years of life are crucial to the healthy development of our tamariki.

“One day every tamaiti will get the best chance in life; because whānau and the whole hapū/iwi understand and value the impact the first 3 years have on the developing brain, and therefore the success of our society.”

There is so much to learn about this part of our well being and Debs presentation was designed to stimulate the desire to learn more. What a brilliant teaser!

The Ngāpuhi whānau led by Percy were the next to take the stage. *Kai is Rongoā – Rongoā is Kai* is a fundamental truth and they have recently launched *Te Mahi Maara Hua Parakore* which can be purchased by contacting tetakupusales@twor-otaki.ac.nz. We were privileged to hear the journey of a courageous wahine who is living testament to the benefits of Hua Parakore. Through healthy eating she has overcome her mauiui and is passionate about promoting Te Waka Kai Ora and the benefits of eating uncontaminated kai. One of the other powerful messages delivered during this presentation was the amount of baggage that we accumulate and carry through our lives. The relief of shedding the baggage and lightening the load was demonstrated very simply by relieving the mokopuna of the heavy bag he was carrying and emptying those things that are no longer important remembering of course not to replace them with equally damaging misinformation, misconceptions and propaganda.

Mirimiri a waiata - Our fourth presenter Jerome Kavanagh was astute enough to recognise that the first slot after a scrumptious lunch is more conducive to an afternoon siesta than an information sharing session and promptly took the audience outside to reacquaint themselves with Papatūānuku and an invigorating round of stress release exercises. On returning to the stage he transported the audience into the world of Hineraukaturi. He demonstrated how every anga, koauau, kohatu and even rākau has a voice. Rather than talk about each taonga pūoro himself he allowed the taonga to do the talking. The healing vibration of music is real and is recognised in many cultures and health modalities *puta noa i te ao*.

Mirimiri a Wairua - For many, even the mention of Wairua invokes a sense of fear and trepidation. We have been brainwashed into believing that Wairua is scary, and most of us have steered clear of the subject. The reality is that the wairua is a natural part of our totality as human beings. Accept the Awe and Lose the Fear talks about de-mystifying the Wairua and taking the time to understand what and how this vital portion of us works. Achieving the ultimate well-being for mankind depends on our ability to balance our physicality with our spirituality. Balance of course being the operative word.

*“Working with and for the Wairua can only be described as an **awe-some, awe-filled honour**. Nothing surprises me anymore ... I know without a doubt that **I DESERVE to be awe-filled**. I deserve to be **WHOLE** ... we are all **AWESOME formidable people** ... ahakoa ko wai, ahakoa no whea.”* - Marilyn Ngahuia Vreede

Mirimiri a Rangahau – Using research to benefit the future of Rongoā Maori was not a subject that resonated with a lot of people until now. Taking the time and opportunity to understand what research is and how it can benefit rongoā was invaluable. Dr Amohia Boulton gave us an insight into the different ways research can be used to support our kaupapa. Cataloguing History, Assisting Advocacy, Contributing to Service Improvement, Strategic Planning and Challenging the Status Quo are all examples of how research can better inform not only the practitioners and clientele but also shape the future role of Te Kāhui Rongoā Trust.

- *Is what we know now, all there is to know?*

If not, what more do we need to know and how will we go about finding it (the answers)?

The latest research project completed by Whakauae Research identified that of the practitioners involved in the survey 38% described themselves as tohunga or principal healers. Of these 64% were women. Women also comprise the majority of support roles i.e. kaimahi, kaiawhina, kaiwhakahaere and whānau assistants. The majority (63%) of principal healers surveyed are over the age of 50. Statistics such as these help to form a picture of what is currently happening in the field of Rongoā and what needs to happen to protect, nurture and grow the Rongoā service in the future. Ka rawe!

Mirimiri a Korero – The Plenary Session with our kaumātua was the highlight of our Symposium. Rev Bruce Aranga (Te Upoko o Te Ika), Whaea Waahi Teki (Whanganui), Whaea Lovey Walsh (Te Tau Ihu) and Whaea Mere Broughton (Taranaki) were asked what the definition of Rongoā was to them personally and/or to their respective iwi. While the question may seem too broad to some it is important that we as Māori take the opportunity to define kaupapa Māori practices ourselves. Some of the responses from our kaumātua kuia were:-

“I rongo nei tātou, i tēnei rangi, ngā rongoā katoa. Ngā rongoā o te awa ngā rongoā o te ngāhere ngā rongoā wairua. Kei a koe hoki tētehi wāhi o te oranga wairua. Kei a koe ano, kei te tangata, kei ahau, kei a koe he rongoā. He aha ai? He mea i homai nā Ihu Karaiti.”

“Te rongoā mōku pea ko ngā waiata, ko aku mokopuna ko rātou he oranga hoki mōku. Ki ahau nei ko ngā waiata tāwhito ko ngā waiata oriori ko tōku whānau he oranga mōku.”

A question from the floor reminded us of the research results mentioned earlier by Amohia. The reality is that the rongoā workforce is aging and many of our younger generations do not have the reo. How do we sustain the rongoā workforce into the future when our language and traditions are not being upheld?

“Kaokaongia nga mokopuna i roto i tena rohe, i tena rohe. Ma nga kaumātua ano rātou e ako. Ma nga kuia ano e whatu he kupu.”

Very loosely translated “Nurture the mokopuna (take them under your wing). It is for the kaumātua to teach them and the kuia will teach them the right language to use.”

Succession planning is high on the list of things to do for many of our practitioners. Finding time and support to do so is another story. One of the kuia from Ngāti Whātua has attempted to retire several times and is still working fulltime in her clinic, purpose built to cater for the increasing numbers of whānau seeking her rongoā. *Tēnā koe e te kuia. Kaore e kore ma Te Atua koe e arahi.*

It was not only our kaumātua that made our Symposium special this year. We were privileged to have several rangatahi present and their energy was invigorating. Karakia was second nature to the tamariki from Waiariki and the waiata tautoko for speakers during whakawhanaungatanga and karakia was amazing. Augurs well for the future!

The Expo part of the day was not as successful as it could have been. Even though we extended the morning tea, afternoon tea and lunch breaks and time after the Symposium and before hākari it was still not long enough for people to get to see what other clinics offer. In hindsight it would have been better to have the Expo on a separate day to allow each rohe time to showcase their mahi and the public time to appreciate the mahi as well.

Summary – The original intent of the Symposium and Expo was for us to Celebrate the Diversity of Rongoā and to promote a **Positive Public Profile** for Rongoā in that diversity. The evaluations completed (51) reflected that we achieved that through the day and gave us food for thought for the next wānanga.

- *It has been awesome, thank you*
- *Very blessed to be here - very grateful I made the choice to be*
- *Wonderfully fantastic weekend thank you all so much*
- *Loved the speakers - all so knowledgeable loved the oriori tinana*
- *The symposium was great the speakers were informative, entertaining, and inspiring*
- *The haukainga were welcoming, I felt looked after, the kai was beautiful, the venue perfect*

- *Nga mihi ki te whanau o tenei rohe!!!; Beautifully hosted and facilitated, event felt seamless*
- *Enjoyed all of the korero it is inspiring, relieving our thirst for knowledge with like-minded people*
- *Opportunities for future, building strategies to influence future options for Health*

Suggestions from evaluations:

- *Permit someone to demonstrate extraction of trauma – while explaining its process and tools used.*
- *Workshops in smaller groups*
- *Send Rongoā Pānui out sooner – (First pānui went out to trustees in March)*
- *More movement*
- *New presenters if presented at other wānanga. (N.B. The speakers were chosen to deliver to staff and management of mainstream Health Providers who have little or no knowledge of Rongoā Maori and are dealing with our whānau, hapū and iwi in the community.)*
- *Making rongoā, gathering rongoā, growing rongoā*
- *Whakaritenga (embalming) tūpāpaku*
- *More workshops on karakia (how, why and when)*
- *Weaving as a spiritual practice/art for healing*

Recommendation for Te Kāhui Rongoā:

Offer two distinct wānanga.

- *Topic specific i.e. making rongoā, teaching mirimiri, etc – target group rongoā whanau.*
- *Symposium/Conference – Informational – target group Health professionals and others dealing with our whanau in the community.*

Heoi ano ra e te whanau,

Kei te rere tonu ngā whakamoemiti ki to tātou Tohunga Tapu. Nāna i homai ngā homaitanga katoa. Korōria ki Tona ingoa. Ka huri aku mihi ki a rātou e tautoko ana i tēnei wānanga Rongoā. Ko koutou Whakauae Research, Te Puni Kokiri, Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Tupoho, Ngā Wātene Māori o Whanganui, Hato Petera Hanera, Crystal Valley, Whanganui Resource Centre, Kii Tahī Nursery & Land care, Adrian Campbell, Mōku Whānau Kaiwhaiki, Te Aio Productions, Te Ara Tika o Rongoā Māori The Whanganui Collective. Tēnā rawa atu koutou katoa.

Kei te menemene haere to tātou Awa Tupua.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

For any further information please contact

Marilyn Ngahuia Vreede

Te Kāhui Rongoā Trustee ki Whanganui

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N.B. Report for Te Kāhui Rongoā Trust Hui a Tau (Sunday 4) written separately.

Rongoā Symposium and Expo

3 October 2015



TIME	PROGRAMME
9.00 – 9.15	Whakatau – Welcome
9.15 – 9.45	Dame Tariana Turia - Keynote Speaker Celebrating the Diversity of Rongoā
9.45 – 10.30	Robert McGowan - Rongoā Rākau Heal the Land and the Land will Heal you.
10.30 – 11.00	Morning Tea Expo open
11.00 – 11.45	Debs Rewiri - Mirimiri-a- Hinengaro Te Whanaketanga o te Roro - The Tupuna mind
11.45 – 12.30	Te Puihi Percy Tipene - Rongoā is Kai – Kai is Rongoā Te Waka Kai Ora
12.30 – 1.30	Lunch (provided) Expo open
1.30 – 2.15	Jerome Kavanagh - Mirimiri-a- Waiata The healing vibration of tupuna music
2.15 – 3.00	Marilyn Ngahuia Vreede - Mirimiri-a-Wairua Demystifying Wairua – Accept the awe and lose the fear.
3.00 – 3.30	Dr Amohia Boulton - Mirimiri-a-Rangahau Why the latest research can benefit Rongoā in the future.
3.30 – 4.30	Afternoon Tea Expo open
4.30 – 5.15	Plenary Session – Where to from here? Te reo o ngā kaumātua – tupuna kōrero
5.15 – 5.45	Adrian Te Patu - Mirimiri-a-Kōrero Summary of the day
5.45 – 6.30	Expo open until hākari
6.30	HĀKARI – Te Awa o Whanganui would be honoured to celebrate the diversity of Rongoā with you all. You are welcome to stay for a celebration feast and entertainment. For catering purposes please indicate on the registration form if you plan to join us.