

South Island. It was to be expected that, as clubs in other centres became familiar with the Canterbury Council, Waitaha, they formed committees of their own, under the umbrella of Te Wai-pounamu (S.I.) Maori Cultural Council, which was formed in 1969.

Many of Waitaha's members are associated closely (e.g. as Trustees), with other Maori organisations — Christchurch's Rehua Marae, the Maori Committee, and the developing new national Marae in Pages Road — Nga Hau e Wha.

#### Pakehas welcome

For us Pakeha, if that was the limit of the work, it might be the end of the subject.

Far from it! Pakeha participation is essential to the whole concept. Oh, one can watch a performance — the impact of the entry; the oratory (whai korero); the welcome, with its frequent mention of haere mai (welcome — 'to the Pakeha, to all of you'); tamariki (children); and Maoritanga; see the waiata poi; and the action songs and hakas; and go away inspired by the gracefulness, harmony, colourful dress, and enthusiasm.

#### Teaching children

Teaching the children is the loveliest way to help demonstrate Maoritanga.

And they certainly enter into it with gusto! It's a delight to see with what relish the younger boys — some of them 4 or 5 years old — do a haka; or act as callers!

Fair-skinned with blue eyes, Ethel Walters epitomises Pakeha involvement. A member of the council from the beginning, she was treasurer for eight years; and now, as secretary, has a "tremendous job" to do justice to. "As a matter of fact," she claims modestly, "it was thrust upon me, this job as secretary! I'm really better at organising — but I've coped on some occasions by sitting down and detailing-off people to be responsible for different things! One of the things I certainly wouldn't be doing — I don't even like cooking much — is catering".

#### Combined effort

So Mrs Walters, the hand behind the wheel, fell in with the well known hospitality of the Maori people, and arranged for the 300 visiting competitors on this occasion, to stay in groups — in some cases 100 or more — at three or four places around the city: Te Rangimarie Centre, the new marae in Philipstown, and others. "It's a combined effort," she says of the organisation, "all

sorts of people help. You see, the object of a marae is to HOST people, and everyone joins in. When the Pages Road Marae is finished, all the visitors can go there, the facilities will cater for everyone."

How do you arrange food for 300 visitors? No problems there, either. Groups coming in pay towards expenses, and the Council buys all the food, distributing it around where groups are going to stay.

Sometimes, people ask Ethel Walters why she took on such a large task; but she is in no doubt. "I've learnt a lot — how to share, and to be tolerant; and these things are very important in the world today, if we are to understand each other more."

#### Loved culture

Now a Life Member of the Waitaha Maori Cultural Council, she has always loved Maori culture, and ever since childhood has had friends who were Maori.

Quoting Hori Brennan (W.M.C.C. representative on the Polynesian Committee), she says "It's not often the same people serve for so many years; it makes this council one of, if not, the longest-serving in New Zealand".

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