

League Notes

AWARUA (BLUFF) MAORI WOMEN'S WELFARE LEAGUE

Report 1981-1982 Regional Conference Twizel.

Tena koutou katoa nga mihi ki a koutou kia huihui mai nei i tenei ra i roto i te whakapono, te tumanako me te rangimarie mo ta tatou hui o Te Ropu Wahine Maori

In a grand effort to keep within the speaking time limit, our report has been streamlined in accordance with the aims and objectives of the League Constitution in order to portray the very active and demanding year that the Awarua Maori Women's Welfare League has experienced.

Social and Economic Development.

The Te Rau Aroha Marae project (Bluff) has been the League's main priority this past year. Due to the fact that our hall "Waitaha" was destroyed by fire in September 1981, the marae project is now taking precedence as a community project for the borough of Bluff.

Catering has always been a forte' of the Awarua Branch and we have made an all out effort together with our Maori Committee, families and many friends to work harder than ever and raise the necessary capital for our marae; part of which — the wharekai — will be built within the next 12 months: God Willing!!

We feel that this is a vital element for the social structure of our community bearing in mind the fact that there is no Turangawaewae here, our Ngaitahu people themselves coming to grips with their tribal identity and Maoritanga, our migratory population — people coming and going all the time, — and a greater urgency for adult education in all spheres Maori and Pakeha. We are positive the marae can cater for all these needs and many more.

Our close liaison with the Awarua Maori Committee provides the impact required by our people as a whole to move forward quickly, quietly and with dignity. Joint fund-raising efforts by the two bodies have proved very fruitful and also an incentive to other organisations, that groups can operate in harmony with each other.

To Render Humane Service to Mankind.

1. Te Awarua Branch assisted the Invercargill Round Table Association, who were instrumental in organising a Door to Door Appeal in aid of Cot Death Research.

2. The District Probation Officer approached us to take on offenders serv-

ed with the Community Service Sentence — an alternative to imprisonment. We AGREED!!

As the offenders we had during the past year were well known to us, communication (one of their biggest hang-ups) had no barriers where we were concerned, therefore co-operation, punctuality and courtesy at all times prevailed.

As a result, these people served their time doing voluntary work such as gardening, housie rosters, waitressing, and general maintenance work in the community. Even though they have completed their time they seem eager to continue helping us especially with our marae project.

3. We have had recourse to take independent action on several occasions regarding children in schools and at home — some with stress problems mainly stemming from the home environment — others in petty crime — a rather infectious disease at present.

The former are usually resolved by the League taking an intermediary role between parents and school. The latter, a more serious matter is one for the police and PARENTS!!

4. We are on call to Ward 12 Psychiatric Ward, Kew Hospital, to Dr. D.A. Silva if the need arises for counselling of Maori patients. So far we have only had to deal with one case in this field.

6. A Community Resource Centre recently set up in Bluff is easing our welfare workload considerably. We are fortunate to have Sr. de. Porres a valuable friend and honorary member of our branch, operating the centre with voluntary staff.

Retention of Culture.

We were very fortunate during the year to have expert tuition in flax-work — headbands, rourou, kete of all shapes sizes and colour, hats and even children's mobiles. Our tutor was Mrs. Te Arani Tini from Ngaruawahia.

Maori Language is still very much a major part of our work with most members taking classes and/or tutoring through the Southland Community College and adapting nicely to the Rakau Method. Our Maori Language Scheme that was formulated 1980-81 has been

rather lethargically accepted by the Dept. of Education (ie. Southland) — actually they've only taken out what they want from it.

Fellowship.

Communication links between existing women's groups in our area have been stepped up. There had been a trend in the past to remain almost totally apart from each other, however infiltration on our part into other groups is important for the Maori people.

It is surprising just how little ... people and in particular Women's groups in our area do know about us. To put right the wrongs that people and the media have conjured up about Maori people, is a major task in itself.

In most cases we feel understanding of others becomes peppered with arrogance at the ignorance of such individuals who are averse to many of the social changes taking place in this country and throughout the world.

Frustrating — though it may seem, this feeling can be gradually overcome by logical discussion, sharing ideas and experiences — learning from each other; in fact, total inter-communication.

It takes pretty special people to tackle this one and the Awarua Branch of Maori Women's Welfare League is fortunate to have these special people in its midst. Membership to date Senior 17. Junior 3. Life 6. Honorary 23.

Tena ano koutou katoa.

Maria Tini — Pres. A.M.W.W.L.

Te Ropu Wahine Maori Toko I Te Ora

The New Year opened very sadly for the League with the passing of our First Vice President, Maria Copeland.

To tatau mate kaupapaharo, a Maria. Haere te ma nu korero, te kai whakapuaki inga whakaaro o te hunga kua riro ki te po, te mangai o to tatau reo rangatira i roto i o tatau whare kura me nga whare wananga. Kua katoa koe te puawai a te iwi, otira Maria kua ruia e koe nga purapura ki te ao nei. Haere e moe i roto i te ariki. Te mamae me to pouri waiho ki to whanau me to Ropu Wahine Toko I Te Ora, kinga mea hoki o tatau i roto i te pouri.

Executive Meeting Feb. 8/9

As almost all Executive members were to be in Auckland from 10 to 15 February to attend the Sub Regional Seminar jointly hosted by the National Council of Women, Pacifica and the Maori Women's Welfare League it was decided to hold the League Executive meeting there also, on the 8/9 February. The meeting was held at the Freeman's Bay Community Centre and members of the Waitarau Branch and visitors from other branches in the Tamaki Makaurau area made Executives feel very welcome — so well did Executive enjoy the experience in fact that they are hopeful of repeating the experiment