

Indigenous voices Indigenous places Indigenous people

Editorial

This is the fourth edition of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium journal. It builds in particular on the 2007 journal *Indigenous Voices Indigenous Visions* that was launched at the annual gathering at Chaminade University in Hawai'i in August 2007. This print edition will be launched at the 2008 gathering in Melbourne Australia and the web version will be posted at the same time. It is very gratifying to receive papers from indigenous academics, scholars and researchers from three continents and the South Pacific Ocean. The topics and the quality of the papers are appreciated. This year's journal theme is a response to the Hawai'i meeting at which several groups asked for the theme of place and indigenous peoples to be explored. This has begun in this journal and is by no means exhausted. It is very much a beginning.

Turoa Royal presents a discussion on the marae, a place that is central to the life of Māori in New Zealand. It is an important institution of Māori life and a place, which has remained a bastion of Māori society despite colonisation and the changes that have occurred over the past 200 years. This paper explores ways in which the marae is a community complex and the ways in which it is significant in bringing communities together. The marae continues to be a beacon for Māori people and a place in which the Māori language and culture are celebrated and protected.

Our playground, the Waitohu Stream is the third in a series of articles, the first two of which were published in the 2007 journal *Indigenous voices Indigenous visions*. Those papers in the voices section were based on interviews with Māori people who lived on the Waitohu Stream, which flows on the northern boundary of the town of Ōtaki. This paper, one in the series, is an interview with Borgia Hakaraia about her memories of life as a child and young woman on the banks of the Waitohu Stream. It confirms the importance of places such as streams, rivers, creeks, coastlines and beaches to indigenous peoples. These places provided the main sources of protein for the family table. They were rich in abundance of fish life only half a century ago. They provided large communities with their staple food. Today the rivers are polluted, struggling to maintain even small quantities of fish life and unsafe for swimming and the water is no longer safe for human consumption. For indigenous communities there is much regret that we have had so little regard for our waterways. It is hoped that these recollections will encourage us to lobby to save our rivers and streams from further pollution and degradation.

Pātaka Moore's paper is based on an interview with George Gray a retired engineer who spent forty years working on the rivers and waterways on the south western coast of New Zealand. In the early 1950s when few indigenous people were appointed to positions of responsibility, George Gray donned his collar and tie and became an influential manager of the rivers and streams in his local area. He knows the banks of those rivers as well as he knows his own back yard. He can provide a history of the changes in the life of the stream, a record of the changes made to manage the stream, the engineering that occurred over five decades. He knows about the volumes and quality of fish that his parents before him took from the rivers. He knows about the

local families that swam and fished and walked the banks of the rivers. A young indigenous researcher, Pātaka Moore has researched and collected interviews with local Maori elders for the past five years, here he records a section of an interview with George Gray.

Marit Henriksen is a Sea Sámi woman from the northern part of Norway. She grew up in Gámavuonna/Komagfjord and is now living in Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino. Marit explains that the Sámi area covers parts of four different nation states, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Her interest in place names is reflected in the article in this journal in which she examines old land surveying documents that tell a story about settlement in the area. They reflect not only settlements but also land use in the area in days gone by. Of further interest is documentation that tells a story of Sámi place names from this area. The maps, figures and photos demonstrate the story being related in this article. This paper represents the theme of the journal well.

Jennifer McAplin of Bacone College, Muskogee, Oklahoma in the United States of America has shared a part of the research from her PhD thesis completed in 2008. Jennifer identifies her tribal links to Ojibwe/Anishinaabe and Diné peoples. She traces a part of the journey she has taken in exploring place and being – themes that are central to this publication and to indigenous peoples the world over. Jennifer presents her journey to find key people who link to her forebears and in doing so finds herself. She has included a tree of life that she completed during a decolonising methodologies workshop in which participants developed a model for indigenous scholars in higher education. The beadwork tree is beautifully colourful and can be viewed in the online version of this journal on the WINHEC website. It forms the centerpiece for a model proposed for the growth and strengthening of identity amongst indigenous scholars in universities. Jennifer McAplin proposes that there is a need to find safe places within institutions in order to resist “dominant oppressive structures”. These safe places will be recognised by indigenous scholars throughout the world who have had their foundations eroded at times while being students in what at times seem like strange places.

Bronwyn Fredericks from Monash University, Queensland University of Technology and the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council, Australia explores the meaning of country to aboriginal Australians. She explains that Country is more than a clan or tribal group. It encompasses all the “cultural norms, values, stories and resources” associated with a particular place. Bronwyn then presents an interview with an indigenous colleague, Pamela Croft, and explores with her the ways in which she incorporates a sense of place within her artwork. Because Pamela Croft’s work is based on the land and place, she is able to explore how these are integrated within her work, her creativity and her wellbeing. This interview draws on a lifetime of experience in observing environmental changes through the eyes of an aboriginal woman who monitors the earth, the coastline, the ecology and life within these spaces. Her artwork integrates storytelling and is a medium for communication of many indigenous issues not least of all the issues of place. Her voice is heard in many ways within this interview shared by Bronwyn Fredericks.

Two women from Bundaberg in Australia submit the final article. Cheri Yavu-Kama-Harathunian and Denise Tomlin have collaborated on a paper that Professor Boni Robertson has described as a “unique and clear analysis of issues pertinent to Indigenous research methodologies and world views.” Further she comments: “I consider the paper has relevance to both a national and international audience in terms of its cultural, linguistic and scholastic

appropriateness. The paper will address many of the issues that have been raised by Indigenous populations across the globe in terms of cultural preservation and protection, culturally appropriate research and epistemologies.” It is a pleasure to include papers that address issues of considerable importance to indigenous researchers.

These seven papers address themes of indigenous people indigenous places. They build on the 2007 journal, which encouraged the use of indigenous voices in exploring visions of our peoples. This 2008 journal will encourage indigenous peoples to gather and record the voices of our parents and elders. I hope it will also encourage those gatherers to present them for publication in future journals. Each year we anticipate that we will be flooded with papers for the editorial board to consider. Many of you have papers being prepared and have not managed to complete them this year. Our Board encourages you to keep working on them and to find places to share them- either in future volumes of this journal or in others. The voices of our peoples need to be heard and we need to be able to read about ourselves in the literature. This journal has provided a forum for those who have papers ready to share and it reflects the growing interest in having another space for indigenous scholars to present their work.

My thanks to the Editorial Board. It is a pleasure to work with a dedicated group of colleagues. My thanks to Charlie McNaught for her support within the WINHEC office. She has maintained contact with all the contributors encouraging them to finish the work they had begun. Writing challenges us. Just when we think we have finished, we want to add another paragraph and another. Every time we read a draft we want to make changes. In reality a paper is never finished. It can always be changed and refined and improved. Thank you to the seven people who let their papers go to us and have allowed us to share your work with our readers, our students and colleagues.

Tēnā koutou katoa.

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