Ringatuu planting, harvesting rites

by Te Kabauotu Maxwell

THIS koreo is a brief study of Te Huamata and Te Pure, the planting and harvesting rites of Te Ringatuu in relation to Matariki.

Te Turuki (Te Rooto) inaugurated Te Huamata and Te Pure in 1879 which became part of what is known by Ringatuu ‘Nga Pou o te Tau’, January 1, June 1, July 1 and November 1 are the pillars of the ringatuu year.

Te Huamata, the planting rite, is held on June 1 and Te Pure, the harvesting rite, is held on November 1. On June 1, Ringatuu planted Te Huamata (sacred garden). Te Maratapu was set aside on a hilltop for Te Anua (God).

Whanau would attend Te Huamata and take with them kopura (seeds) from their crop this year before to be planted in Te Maratapu as an offering to Te Anua. These kopura would be placed in a special kite (kit) that was woven specifically for Te Huamata. Special karakia (prayers) would be conducted, whakamoeseni (thanksgiving) and tonto (asking for bountiful crops).

On May 29 before the setting of the sun, only the tohunga (high priests) would go to Te Maratapu to plant the selected kopura. On arrival, a karakia would be held prior to entry. When planting was complete, the tohunga would leave Te Maratapu, closing it off with another karakia. Te Maratapu was left and no person would be permitted to enter until Te Pure.

Two kopura would be left over after planting which the tohunga would place in the kite with the remaining kopura, which became tapu also.

On May 30, the remaining kopura would be planted in the sea. A karakia would be conducted at this time. The tohunga would then proceed to the awa (river) and the ngarehu (brush) where the same planting ritual would take place.

Maori regard these places as gardens also. Two kopura would be left over and these would be taken to Te Maratapu to be planted. This process would connect all gardens mentioned previously to Te Maratapu, hence rendering all these places tapu. No harvesting of kai (food) was permitted until Te Pure.

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Turanganui a Kiwa to celebrate Maori New Year

by Thelma Karaitiana

Te Runanga o Turanganui a Kiwa
special projects manager

Matariki ahunga nui - Matariki provider of plenty
I te atapu o nga rangi o Mea ki kia kitea e te tangata te ahua tuatahi o Matariki. Na te rangi tuatahui o Hune ki te rangi tuatahui ka timata te whakapapa o ene whetu me te marumaru hona ki te rangi whakohua i Turanganui a Kiwa. A te tuwharu o nga rangi o Hune i timata te uao o Matariki ki Turanganui a Kiwa. Mai i te haerua e te ono karaka i te atapu ki te whitu karaka ka piataata mai nga whata virihia o Matariki.

HERE in Turanganui a Kiwa the new moon makes its appearance on the seventh of June. However, the marumaru or the lunar calendar for the iwi of Turanganui a Kiwa begins on the eighth of June 2005 and is marked as Whiro.

The Ngai Tamanuhiri Conservation Group and the people of Whatatutu are tangata whenua who have gathered to organise programmes to celebrate the advent of Matariki to Turanganui a Kiwa.

The revolving circuit of programmes being offered by the Ngai Tamanuhiri Conservation Group opens on June 20, 2005 at 8.30am with a powhiri at the Tairawhiti Museum. Soraya Pohatu is the co-ordinator of the Ngai Tamanuhiri programme which includes the Starlab from Te Papatongarewa. Art Workshops, a presentation from Te Whare Taonga o Te Whaiti and a workshop about birdlife. The programme will be held over the week officially closing on June 26th 2005 with breakfast, karakia, a special planting ceremony and marutuakaraka, or kite flying.

The Whatatutu focus for Matariki is the reinvigoration of the traditional concepts of planting, growing and gathering kai from gardens.

Event organiser Vanessa Puia of Whatatutu says once upon a time there were small gardens flourishing all over the community. While this is not so evident now, she expects to soon see locals eating fresh homegrown vegetables. For further information on these initiatives please contact; Soraya Pohatu 06 8628 083 and Vanessa Puia 06 8621 001.

THE PRE-DAWN rise of Matariki can be seen in the last few days of May every year. The new moon can be seen for the first time on these dates.

2005 June 8,
2006 June 27,
2007 June 16,
2008 June 5, 2009 June 24,
2010 June 14,
2011 June 4, 2012 June 21,
2013 June 10,
2014 June 28, 2015 June 18,
2016 June 6,
2017 June 25, 2018 June 15, 2019 June 5,