



TE ROOPU O TE HINGA WHANAU SPECIAL EDITION



Pictured above: Elizabeth Hinga—Tailem Bend, Australia Sept 2008

I am Elizabeth Mary Hinga

"My mind, heart, soul, and existence are composed of love, aspiration, compassion, dreams, pride, hope, understanding and determination - all the ingredients essential for life.

My bones and veins branching from my core, from the centre of my existence are my ancestors, my wairua, my relationship with IO - the Supreme Being.

My blood is life sustaining, life forming and cleansing. It nourishes the bones and flesh through a labyrinth of interconnected veins.

"...from the centre of my existence are my ancestors, my wairua, my relationship with IO ..."

lives are my descendants.

My breath is the same breath passed on to my

My breath is life - purposeful, regenerating and seeps through countless layers of new lives. These

tamariki, my mokopuna and the countless offspring which will eventually derive from them. They are my life - they clothe me. They are my wondrous korowai which comforts me for all time.

This is my story

My last born suckles on my breast, kicks and plays as any child and causes my belly to rumble and my body to shudder. His siblings are wary. My son is with me. He stays

to the very end holding my hand ever so gently as I slip into the next world. He and his siblings and their tamariki and mokopuna allow constant light to shine between life and death.

To my beloved offspring it was the right time for me to depart.

It is also the right time for you to grow and understand the responsibilities of becoming all that you can be. I heard your waiata that final night, I felt your tears, I listened as you prayed and I saw you lament.

I have as it were allowed sickness to brace itself against me, to thrust me forward pushing me away to a new existence and to end my physical embrace with you. Death is a journey. It is a passage way to life eternal. It is the gift of love. It is a gift to me and to you—an imprint in our consciousness handed down from Te Kore (Nothingness) through Te Pō (Night). A gift which we in turn pass through in order to continue the cycle of creation.

Creation requires pain, it requires sacrifice, it requires possibility and belief. It is much like food, water and light for any living thing.

And now, our separation is a time of inward turning, a time of discovery, a time of power, a time of regenerating energy and a time of change.

My korowai which cloaked my body in the past was also the foundation to receive the seed for the future. My husband and I planted the seeds and wove it into the tapestry of my korowai.

As we did so our tears nourished the seeds as too did my tupuna thus fulfilling a promise from the past.

"...You my tamariki and mokopuna create the light between us..."

"...And now I am at peace. At eternal peace with my wondrous korowai placed carefully upon my body..."

This was the beginning of my journey as mum from whom all those are created and to whom all will eventually return.

You my tamariki and mokopuna create the light between us. Light which allows growth and the ability to stand tall.

And now that my descendants have been free to create whatever their will desires, I move forward assured of their future and their role within the korowai.

I hear my descendants calling a karanga of acknowledgement and of understanding that they will not themselves forget. They call to celebrate a new day and to honour those who have passed on to the next world. They call to acknowledge their ancestral parents and forebears.

And now I am at peace. At eternal peace with my wondrous korowai placed carefully upon my body. It will sustain me in the after-life.

My husband, my tamariki, my mokopuna and all those yet to come - I am present in you because I am in your bones, I am in your veins, I am in your heart, I am there when you breath, I am your kuia, I am....

Elizabeth Mary Hinga 1941-2011."

(Adapted from Wahine Toa by Darrell Hinga)



Pictured above: Elizabeth Hinga— with her wondrous Korowai



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Te Roopu Hinga Whanau Newsletter

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FAREWELL NANA DEAR LADY

—BY RHONDA STIMPSON, TRINITY GILL, DELTHIA STIMPSON AND JEANNINE STIMPSON

My experience during Nans' Tangi was an educational one actually. It was my first time spending the night in a marae and I had never been at a tangi long enough to see what happens. It was rather cool considering the circumstances.

I really enjoyed spending time with the family. Everyone shared their experience together and we all got through it.

As a family we cried together, laughed together, sang songs together. It was awesome and I am sure Nan would have loved it.

I really DISLIKED how early we had to get up! Holy heck. When the sun's not up, neither should anyone else. Who doesn't know that lol (laugh out loud).

It was cold and everyone looked worse for wear. That's why its called beauty sleep, the more you get, the better you look the following morning.

Catching up with our immediate family was great—to some extent haha. It was cool. Doing the dishes whilst singing, chilling out by the wharekai, not doing what we're supposed to be doing—it was like any other whanau reunion except...well...yeah.

Getting to know the extended family was pretty mean. I got to know a few people but don't expect me to remember their names though. They shared some memories of Nan which was really cool. Some made me laugh, some made me question whether Nan was in the right state of mind at the time of the predicament they were speaking of and some made me realise even more of just how big Nan's love was for her family.

Nana may not be with us anymore but she will be there guiding us and helping us to stay strong and do our best.

She had her wrongs, no doubt, but who doesn't? She made up for that with all the love she gave us throughout her years.

I love you Nanny Liz—*Rhonda Stimpson*

It is understandable that people know me as an Australian. I have adjusted to this lifestyle and have lived here most of my life. But I am NOT Australian.

My identity is that of a Maori and if it were not for Nana I wouldn't have the confidence to say it with pride.

"As a family. We cried together, laughed together, sang songs together."

For me, the passing of Nana is more than just the mourning of

a loved one. Its like losing a part of myself. I don't think that people understand how lonely it is to grow up without other whanau growing up with you. Your sense of belonging deteriorates overtime especially when you see the rest of your whanau so strongly affiliated to their Maori culture. To some extent it does make you question - "Who am I" ? Do I actually belong here ? and am I actually Australian ?

I am sure most of you haven't had the need to ask yourselves these questions but for me these thoughts regularly come into play. As I continue the journey into adulthood knowing who I am is obviously one of the hardest things to answer. Nana has shown me these answers all along.

Since I was little I have always enjoyed spending time with Nana. I never saw her often, but I cherished those moments especially now. Nana always

told me about EVERY SINGLE immediate whanau member, showed me photos and just smiled while she talked about the whanau she loved so much.

I don't think anyone could ever love a family as much as Nana did. Even when we had family reunions and get togethers, I remember being so shy because I hardly knew anyone and I also didn't know all the kapahaka songs (or pretty much any song at all). During these times nana would always comfort me and remind me that this is MY family too and that there is no need to be afraid and that this is where I belong.

It has always been music with Nana—it was her passion and I believe it is was and still is her legacy. Whether we like it or not, music has embodied every single one of Nana's descendants and the love of music will always

be a part of Nana that we find in ourselves.

Although the tangi was a very sad and tough occasion once again Nana was answering my question.

Being the very first tangi I have ever attended, it brought me closer to knowing who I am and instead of being

told where I was from and everything about my own culture I actually got to embrace it first hand. If you don't already know Oz funerals only last like 2 hours). This tangi will definitely be an unforgettable experience.

Nana has always ALWAYS said Te Takinga was her home and even now, I remember how her face use to light up when she spoke about it.

It was such a beautiful service for Nana, the surroundings and her COFFIN (pretty flash Nana). I know that if there were ever a way to go, Nana definitely got it.

I do want to say thank you to absolutely everyone who was part of the farewell for Nana as not only did you help me acknowledge that I am proud to be part of such a wonderful whanau but you helped me make such a difficult time feel like a joyous occasion. I was so glad to be back in New Zealand and I felt like I was at peace with knowing who I am and where I belong.

Thank you Nana for everything you have done for me. I am still mourning the loss of you Nana, but even when you are gone you are still helping me. You showed me a part of who I am and where I am from. Nan you helped dad and I meet my brother, you've given me signs to know that your okay, you brought dad back to Oz and for one very last time Nana you bought the whanau together again.

I know your with me in spirit, so I do feel at peace knowing that your closer to me now than what you were when you were back in New Zealand and I guess all I can say is that I love you so much!

I cant really explain how much Nana has



Pictured above: Nana brought the family together—one last time

"Since I was little I have always enjoyed spending time with Nana."



Pictured above: Catching up with immediate family during nana's tangi at Te Takinga marae

"Getting to know the extended family was pretty mean. I got to know a few people..."

"I feel Nan's passing allows me to appreciate how in tune we really are when it comes to our culture..."

Nana lived 25,465 days or 611,160 hours or 36,669,600 minutes or 2,200,176,000 seconds!

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helped me embrace and become more spiritually aware of who I am even though I have no regrets living in Australia.

I feel Nan's passing allows me to appreciate how in tune we really are when it comes to our culture. I know it might sound weird to you guys, but really I am so proud to be a Maori and truly if it wasn't help from my Nana who had a heart of gold, had a passion for music and was just so affiliated to where she called home I wouldn't be where I am.

So once again thank you Nan. I love you x—
Trinity Gill

Mum was such a strong courageous woman with the strength that would scare Hercules and Superman.

Mum always made a huge impression on many people sometimes good and sometimes not to so good. Those that met or knew her, never stood in her way. You stand on her toes and she made you regret it. Our old neighbours from Capella place felt threatened by her at times—even the men.

Mum certainly made an impact on families like the Tuliakiono's, Moko's, Hohaia's, Terekia's and many others. She became very close friends with them.

She was such a feisty woman.

Mum and dad's alcohol recovery days was an amazing development for our family. They both fell instantly in love with the Papakura Salvation Army Corps.

The officers greeted Mum and Dad with open arms. They were lieutenants Graham and Veronica Robertson. They both made a huge impression on mum and dad to the extent that mum knew her place on earth was with the Salvation Army.

Mum made such a brilliant effort impressing the Lieutenants. It wasn't long before she became a soldier. Everyone was so proud when her and dad were installed as senior soldiers in the Papakura Salvation Army Corps

What was my own personal experience with Mums tangi? My first honest thought was

how do we do a funeral??? I have never experienced a loved one this close to our whole family—just passing away.

During the funeral I was so impressed how we fulfilled mum's wishes. She had an exceptional Service at the Papakura Salvation Army Corps on Friday 1 July 2011. The singing, laughter and tributes befitted the person mum was. The minister was former corps officer Major Ian Hutson. Speakers were long time friends pastors Mike Hayes and Clive Alexander. Tributes from the congregation were invited before eulogies were delivered by her son's Darrell, Roger and Lindsey. As we all have for several years now we sang what has become our traditional family song "Thank you Lord". Major Hutson delivered a stirring message before everyone had afternoon tea.

After the service we put mum back in the van and headed to Capella place for a slow drive through the old neighbourhood. It was so touching to talk to the Moka whanau who came out of their house and talked to us for several minutes. We then travelled to the Mangere Urupa (cemetery) where we met up with Susan and Anita Opai. This urupa was originally earmarked as mum's final resting place until we discovered that the urupa would most likely finish within a few years.

The Mangere urupa was one of mum's favourite places to visit. It's peaceful and serene setting against the backdrop of a bustling city is just one of the attractions. The other is the many whanau who are interred there.

We arrived home to Hamilton at 7:00pm. It was such a busy day.

Saturday we prepared ourselves for the Mourea marae located mere meters from her original home. I was nervous. How were we going to be treated was my first concern!

"How do we present ourselves or position ourselves after entering a marae?" We always relied on mum to be our leader. It was truly an experience I'll never forget. We were surprised how much aroha (love) we received from our Ngati Pikiao whanau. They were very understanding and supportive.

My most lasting impression of mum is of her being a tough manly sort of woman.

It was an absolute pleasure to spend a few days with mum by her bedside. I was especially happy to make my peace with her. I got to apologize for any heart breaks I had caused her in her life time and I will still live with some regrets.

We had our moments together... I just knew mum didn't have long with us and she began to look so peaceful and no longer in pain. It was certainly a sad moment together. I Love you mum x x x — *Delthia Stimpson*

To my dearest darling Nana,
Up in Heaven, high above,
I know today your with us all,
And sending all your love.

You'll never be forgotten Nan,
I'll just close my eyes and see,
Your smiling face and feel your love
And you'll be close to me.

The memory of you
Will live forever in our heart
We will always miss you
We've missed you from the start.

Your memory will live on
As we go our own way
But you were never gone
In a way, you chose to stay

You had such a long life,
So many have so less,
It was your time, the Angels came,
And placed you with the best.

Your our angel now
To show us right from wrong
Just as you were in life
Now your 10 times strong.

So dear Nana, up above
Although your no longer here,
In my heart is where I'll keep you,
Forever, you'll be near.

— by *Jeannine Stimpson*



Pictured above: Nana has always said Te Takinga was her home....

"We always relied on mum to be our leader...."

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*Pictured above: Nana...you're our Angel—
In my heart is where I'll keep you*

WHANAU PROFILE

Elizabeth Mary Hinga nee Rapana was born on Saturday 11 October 1941 to Pererika Fredrick Rapana and Merita Renati.

Elizabeth is best remembered as Betty amongst whanau and friends within the Bay of Plenty and as Liz by her in-laws and friends in the Auckland region.

She has 5 brothers (Wihau, Renati, Thompson, Rawiri and George) and 4 sisters (Te Aotepairu, June, Veronica and Tui). Elizabeth was the youngest *middle* child.

Elizabeth once described herself as something of a rebel always getting in trouble with mainly her father. Koro Fred was a rather rapacious sort and like many families—then and now, it was her mum who would provide comfort and liberation! Her dad was a bus driver and although he was a strict person at times, Elizabeth always had a soft spot for him. One of her favourite childhood memories was listening to her mum and dad talk late into the evening and early in the morning—long before sunrise.

The family homestead was not a big house by any stretch but somehow the Rapana family survived. They lived off the local river catching small fish and freshwater crayfish as well as diving for pennies under the bridge tossed by passing tourists. The river played a central role during those early days. Today, it is mainly used for recreational purposes.

Living without electricity, fresh running water and the comforts modern society often takes for granted did not hinder childhood or adolescent development. She enjoyed the company of her family. By all accounts she had a normal and unremarkable upbringing unlike her early adult years.

As a young adult and mum to two small children, Elizabeth left Mourea and Rotorua and headed

north. Her two first born were left with family and close associates as she went in search of a new life. She found work in various places and ended up working with her future brother-in-law. It was through this connection she would meet her future husband and lifelong partner Rangi Charles Hinga in 1965 thus beginning a relationship spanning over four decades until her passing.

Together they tried their hand at dairy farming in the Northland region of Wellsford. Here they gave birth to two children before moving back to Auckland. Following moves to several different family houses and, after the birth of three more children, they were given a home by the Department of Maori Affairs. Their last child was born not long after the move and they would continue to live in this home for the next 18 years.

In 1983 following several years of heavy drinking and gambling Elizabeth, along with her husband, declared war on their destructive lifestyle. With the help of The Salvation Army (Te Ope Whakaora) they transformed their lives into God-fearing and kingdom fighting soldiers. This dynamic duo began a new journey that would take them to the spiritual heights of Everest to the uninhabitable depths of the forbidden valley. But she soldiered on determined to consolidate the divine changes in her life.

Elizabeth played a largely supportive role. She would provide the back up vocals in the many duets her and her husband performed within The Army and into countless homes and provinces across the country.

In her latter years Elizabeth rendered numerous hours of voluntary services to Te Ope Whakaora the 'Army that Saves'. She remained ever loyal to the cause. She personified compassion and built her ideals on servant hood—even as co-leader of the Te Ope Whakaora Culture Group. These qualities were a far cry to her past life.

In the end Elizabeth will be best remembered not for her former brutal persona, but for her sense of social justice, her infectious laugh, her tenacity, her singing and her love for her family.

Elizabeth Mary Hinga passed away on 30 June 2011 at 69 years 8 months and 20 days.

Elizabeth is survived by 8 children, 26 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren the most recent of whom was born 22 days later to her namesake Elizabeth May Jean Blick.

- by Darrell Hinga

And the Lord said: *'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord.'*

Matthew 25:23



Pictured above: Dad and mum as soldiers of The Salvation Army.



It was a farewell unlike any other. The day was 30 June 2011. It was a slightly overcast morning with a hint of cool breeze in the air.

At least that's what I was told. I wasn't actually there that morning at the Gallagher Hospice in Hamilton.

I do know one thing. Mum would have a most unusual send off. Services were planned for that evening, the following day in Auckland and eventually at her home marae in Mourea (10km NE of Rotorua).

I arrived from Ireland at 11:00am whereupon I discovered what I didn't know—that mum had passed away earlier that morning. My daughter Trinity arrived a few hours later.

At the funeral home we dressed mum and selected her coffin. We wanted to send mum off in style and this we did. She was dressed in her Salvation Army uniform with her korowai draped over her. Her coffin was unusual especially for a Maori. We only ever saw these types of coffins on TV for the rich and famous.

The next day we travelled to Papakura for a memorial service attended by mainly her inlaws, church friends and former neighbours.

Later we took mum for a drive to Manurewa stopping briefly to reminisce before visiting the Hinga whanau urupa in Mangere. It was a pleasure driving mum to all these places and spending time with dad.

Back in Hamilton we took time to further reflect on mum's life before waking early. We had to be in Mourea by 4:00pm. I raced to Auckland to get my son whom I met for the first time. It was both a sad and happy occasion.

Unfortunately, we didn't make it to Mourea on time (in fact we were 2 hours behind schedule) but the Rapana whanau were very understanding.

It was a weird feeling because I knew this was to be the final resting place for mum and yet it would also be an opportunity to mourn alongside her family and those of my fathers.

It was great to see hundreds of people share their grief with us and to experience traditional Maori protocol. The kuia and kaumatua that represented us were amazing.

The numerous services, singing, laughter and story-telling was incredible.

Dealing with the loss of my mum and sharing my grief with my children was heartbreaking and moving. It would be a time of intensely mixed emotions. To some extent I have my mother to thank for reuniting us and I know she would have wanted it to be under different circumstances. But this spoke volumes about her and I would like to think this was one of her final acts.

I would also like to thank my lovely wife Eve for her tremendous support and sacrifice.

Mum, I still remember the letter you wrote me. I will always cherish it and know that you will be with me and my family always. *"I love you mum."*

- Roger Hinga



Pictured above: Roger with daughter Trinity and son Giovanni

