



**Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi**  
INCORPORATED

## **MEDIA RELEASE – 30 August 2010**

### **‘AN ESTEEMED AWARD FOR AN ESTEEMED LADY’**

Tata Wairukuruku Maere was one of five esteemed kaumātua awarded the Ngā Tohu a Tā Kingi Ihaka Award at the Te Waka Toi Awards held over the weekend in recognition of her lifetime contribution to the maintenance and continuity of Toi Māori.

Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated is pleased to be acknowledge Tata Maere for her achievement and for the work she continues to do in our community.

Tata Wairukuruku Maere is of Ngāti Naho, Ngāti Mahuta o Tainui, Waikato, Ngāti Poporo, Kahungunu descent. She is affectionately known in her community at Bridge Pa, Hawke’s Bay as ‘Nanny Tata’ or ‘Mother Maere’, a wonderful woman with attributes that reflect her lovely nature. Throughout the years she has voluntarily given her time to the people of her community and continues to help everyone regardless of their background or nationality.

Tata’s passion for Māori culture was fostered at Queen Victoria College. She recalls auditioning for the school Kapa Haka group and never knowing why she didn’t make the cut. Much later in life Tata judged the inaugural 1980 Te Matatini National Kapa Haka Competitions and asked one of her school Kapa Haka mentors there why she had missed out all those years ago, only to be told that she was considered ‘uncoordinated’.

At 91 years of age Tata is pleased to say that she didn’t take long to get coordinated after her school days and went on to become a very successful professional entertainer in the music industry. Her Te Arohanui Kapa Haka Group performed in Hawaii in 1963 (and again in 1993) and toured the USA where, Tata recounts excitedly, “We even performed at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles.” She still enjoys music and participates at community events and entertaining in the Old People’s Homes with her ukelele ensemble.

A passionate advocate for Māori cultural awareness and excellence, Tata continues to astound. In 2008 she was part of the 2000 strong powhiri for the inaugural Takitimu Festival in Hawkes Bay and last year she welcomed the Prime Minister to Waipatu Marae during his visit to Kahungunu. She is also a Justice of the Peace; the Kuia for Hawke’s Bay Prison, Hawke’s Bay District Health Board, and often represents Ngati Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated and Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga at events.

Tata continues to work and is employed at Central Health Limited and on her off days she is the Kaumatua on air at Radio Kahungunu.

Cultural identity is paramount and is the soul of the iwi. Retention of our cultural identity is a strategic priority for Ngati Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated. We are pleased to support this acknowledgement of Nanny Tata Maere.

**For media enquiries contact:**

Ruth Wong: Communications Adviser  
Ngati Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated  
Work: 06 8762718  
Mobile: 027 213 9547  
Email: [ruth@kahungunu.iwi.nz](mailto:ruth@kahungunu.iwi.nz)