



# Winter Talk 2007

*12-17 January 2007*

**Report of Bardia Matiu**

*February 2007*



Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa

## Missions Council

**INDIGENOUS**

**NATIONS**

A YOUTH-ELDER PROJECT OF THE ANGLICAN INDIGENOUS NETWORK

[WWW.RANGATAHI.ORG.NZ](http://WWW.RANGATAHI.ORG.NZ)

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## **Trip of a Life-time**

It is highly appropriate that this report be submitted to your council to acknowledge the considerable resource injection that covered my travel and accommodation expenses to attend the January 2007 session of Winter Talk in the State of Virginia, United States of America. It was an absolute honour to be selected to represent Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa at this international gathering; which was truly an experience of a life-time. Through this report, may I extend my sincere thanks to members of the council for the provision, and the trust given to my selection to act as your representative.

This report seeks to provide to the council;

- a. a background on some of the pre-trip planning objectives formulated with an aim of capitalising on the Winter Talk experience
- b. a commentary on certain outcomes achieved in terms of networks created and the identification of future opportunities for the building and strengthening of the youth component within the Anglican Indigenous Network, and
- c. a personal account of Winter Talk

## **Anglican Indigenous Network – A Powerful Kaupapa**

Schooling up on the history and aims of the Anglican Indigenous Network prior to Winter Talk was a potent preview into how this network can platform real possibilities for indigenous people's to collaborate within a 'world church' context; to tautoko each nation's struggle for justice (both within and outside the church confines); and, to tautoko our collective spiritual, cultural and social development. Attending Winter Talk showed in practical terms just how potent such collaboration would be.

## **Focus on Building the Indigenous Church Whare**

Presented with a prime opportunity to attend an international indigenous forum, a series of planning workshops were undertaken to identify areas where Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa rangatahi could capitalise on through attendance at Winter Talk. With assistance from the Venerable Hirini Kaa a list of achievable objectives was compiled. Simple in intent, these objectives were designed to initiate a meaningful conversation between Rangatahi Māori and Native American youth around collaborating to continue the building of the Anglican Indigenous Network kaupapa.

## Communication Opportunities

The overall aim of the Indigenous network: 'to build a new generation of strong Anglican/Episcopalian indigenous leadership and relationships', and 'to increase youth participation in indigenous ministries' influenced the design of our objectives.

The first steps towards establishing a solid foundation for indigenous youth within the Anglican Indigenous network was identified through the improvement in the lines of communication. The objectives therefore hovered around strengthening communications.

### *Rangatahi / Youth Representatives at Winter Talk*



Back Row: Peter Pilot-Wakaisu (Thursday Island, Torres Strait, Australia), Bardia Matiu (Auckland, Aotearoa / New Zealand), Elisha Two Bears (Forte Yates, America), Keane Akao (Honolulu, Hawaii), Isaiah Brokenleg (Minneapolis, America).

Front Row: Emily Gallagher (Baltimore, America), Sarah Eagle Heart-Cuny (Pensicola, Florida, America), Willow Fodor (Administrator to Office of Native American Ministries, New York, America), Phoebe Gallagher (New Jersey, America) and Garrick Velarde (Bloomfield, New Mexico, America).

## Objectives

1. *RUIA*, the fully established, multi-media website operated by Te Māra ([www.rangatahi.org.nz](http://www.rangatahi.org.nz)) was tagged as an innovative tool to share with the Native American church youth representatives developing information and communication technology.
2. Another objective set was communication with home, reporting on aspects of Winter Talk. Photographs and recording of interviews with indigenous rangatahi in attendance was part of my brief while overseas. The intention behind this objective was to share the Winter Talk experience with as many rangatahi as possible via the Te Māra website.
3. Establishing an email database/group between rangatahi Māori and Native American youth was also targeted; the intention, to facilitate a conversational portal around how the indigenous network could be further designed and made more effective through lobbying for change within the current network structure.

## Outcomes

### Objective 1

- The Office of Native American ministries had initially funded Sarah Eagleheart Cuny to develop a key youth website. Unfortunately, after approaching Sarah to offer our technical support for her project we learned that the funding had been pulled. Feeling discouraged Sarah is attempting to raise the necessary funding required to establish the website as she feels that it is an important communication tool to strengthening their indigenous ministries. On behalf of Te Māra, and understanding the extreme necessity for technology, I informed Sarah of our desire and availability to assist her in establishing that website. It is envisaged that the rangatahi website design will provide a template for Sarah to draw from.

### Objective 2

- The venue for Winter Talk did not have ready access to communication technologies which hindered the reporting back aspect of the trip. I attempted to share as much of the trip with rangatahi Māori who could access the webpage as possible. The effort of sharing the experience via the website was targeted towards familiarising rangatahi with the type of role Māori play and will continue to play in attending these international forums. Photographs and interviews were collected during the summit and displayed on the rangatahi website. Provided seven interviews with Native American youth in attendance at Winter Talk. According to the site counter – the website has taken over 500 hits to view the Winter Talk chapter of the website.

### Objective 3

- Since Winter Talk the youth participants have maintained constant contact via email. Inspired and with a new found desire to build our indigenous relationships there is a continuing dialogue around how to physically achieve this. The current network of approximately eight people spreads from Aotearoa, Australia, Hawaii, United States of America and Alaska. This is a most important outcome – however in trying to maintain that same level of hype is difficult.

From informal discussions at Winter Talk and continuing communication via email there is a common theme that has emerged. It is a desire to continue a conversation to growing the indigenous youth network to determine what potential there is in engaging across cultures. The vitality and enthusiasm for international indigenous collaboration born out of the youth fellowship at Winter Talk was encouraging. However, taking a step back from the hype – the question one has to ask is; does Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa rangatahi have enough energy and resources to focus on international collaboration? Will this focus take away from strengthening ourselves nationally? My basic answer to these questions is that engaging internationally will strengthen our Māori church, but national initiatives to strengthen ourselves should be paramount. The possibility of configuring the Winter Talk tradition into a Māori kaupapa targeted at strengthening our Māori church is one example of how rangatahi Māori can derive benefits from engaging in international indigenous forums.

### Winter Talk – He tikanga tūturu

Observing the traditional gathering that is Winter Talk was an overwhelming experience. Winter Talk, as a derivative of the Native American cultural story telling festival held in the winter months provides an essential forum in which Native American church history is retold and thus thrust in to the present consciousness of the present day church as an education for the youth.

The building of the cultural altar facilitates the spiritual dimension of Winter Talk. Each of the 70 participants brought forward cultural items to place on the altar for the duration of the summit. As each person placed their contribution on the altar and offered an explanation behind the spiritual relevance of that object the observer was afforded a view into the individual's cultural and spiritual worldview. This session was powerful and highly emotional. Participants were appreciative also for the Māori spirituality context provided through the offering of paua shell and pounamu by Ven Dr Hone Kaa and myself.

Part of the remembering centred on the Chieftainess Pochahontas and her part in the history of the settlement of America by Pākehā 400 years ago. This was the main theme of Winter Talk 2007. The venue, Chanco on the James, in the State of Virginia

was a physical reminder of Pākehā settlement as this was the district where the first Pākehā ships dropped anchor and settled their peoples 400 years previous.

A painting of Pochahontas, (known to Native Americans as Mataoka) was designed by the Rev Robert Two Bulls and placed on the cultural altar as the special guest of Winter Talk 2007. The main Eucharist included the unveiling of the Mataoka painting – and prayers offered for the future of Native American ministry.

The ripples of discovery were part of the discussions, and within those discussions spewed out the horrific history Native Americans were subjected to by the Pākehā settlers. Viewing those discussions from a front row seat the Native American history seemed like a mirror image of the Māori colonisation story of greed, manipulation, domination and enculturation.

One of the most moving moments of Winter Talks was hearing the local Chief, Mr Ken Adams recounting the words of the chief Powahatan (father of Mataoka) in response to the stealing of corn and vegetables from their fields by the Pākehā settlers; the chief asked, “Why do you take from us with your weapons what we would so gladly give you with love”. There were many opportunities at Winter Talk that provided theological insights into Native American culture. The lessons learned and experienced are proving to be highly valuable personally.

Winter Talk participants accompanying Mataoka to the James River, the historic scene where the first European peoples settled in America



The reputation of Māori preceded our arrival. Comments fielded from older representatives were of wonderment surrounding the past achievements of the

Māori Church. These comments made me reflect on the depth of struggle, passion and fortitude the Māori leaders of the past sustained to create Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa.

Spending time at Winter Talk put in perspective for me how the Māori church are so far ahead other indigenous nations in many respects, mainly because we have held a tight grip on the Tiriti o Waitangi and because we have brilliant leaders and thinkers (past and present) who refuse to let Māori be overwhelmed and subsumed under Pākehā racism and hegemony. If there is one thing we can offer the international indigenous network, it is to be found in the Māori models and experience that provides a vine for climbing out from under Pākehā domination.

## **Conclusion – Kia anga whakamua**

The recurring theme within this report has been to stress the value of maintaining a meaningful communication with Native American youth with an intention on collectively building and strengthening the Anglican Indigenous Network. The offshoots of a fully functioning and operational indigenous network will be highly beneficial for all nations who chose to engage. The possibilities however need to be identified.

With the upcoming Anglican Indigenous Network hui to be held in Vancouver in May 2007, comes yet another opportunity to strengthen the youth networks between the Māori nation and other indigenous nations.

Again, through this report I congratulate the council on your foresight in maintaining a Māori presence at these international indigenous forums. Having experienced Winter Talk, and through dialogue with other representatives who have attended similar hui, it is our collective view that the Anglican Indigenous Network has the potential to be a powerful international institution to advance the aspirations of the Indigenous Church to carry out an effective gospel mission .

Hei whakamutu ake i tēnei wahanga oku, kei te tuku tonu ngā whakamoemiti ki te Runga Rawa. Nāna te tuku mai o tātou tikanga whakahaere, ko te āroha tētahi ki tētahi. Nāna hoki i whakapūmautia te noho o nga tāngata whenua ki runga i te whenua i tākohangia e Ia hei ōranga tīnana, hei ōranga wairua. Heke iho ki a tātou i tēnei whakatupuranga te taea te kī, 'E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiaātea'

### **Psalm 100**

*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endures to all generations.*