

Ko whāngai te kaupapa: A child of other parents

**Whakapapa Research
Project series: Whāngai**



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Whakapapa Research Project series

This is part of a series of writings from eight whānau researchers on nine kaupapa. This kaupapa is about whāngai.

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Aspirational letter to future generations

Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) and whakapapa

Kai

Matriarch

Research methodology and methods

Whānau event

Whāngai

Whenua

Taonga



Ko whāngai te kaupapa: A child of other parents

Ko whāngai te kaupapa
Ko whakapapa te take
E kore au e ngaro, he kakano i ruiruia mai i Rangiātea
Tīhei mauri ora!

According to the late Professor Wharehuia Milroy (McRae, & Nikora, 2006):

Ko te whāngai (adopted child)
Ko te atawhai (fostered child - show kindness toward)
Ko te taurima (to treat with care)
Ko te tiaki (to look after)
Ko te whakatipu (to make grow)
Whāngai can be 'temporary or it can be permanent'.

He kupu whakaūpoko: Introduction

Whāngai is a customary Māori adoption practice where a child is raised by someone other than their birth parents – usually, a relative or other members of their whānau (Keane, 2011; McRae, & Nikora, 2006). Whāngai can be defined as “to feed, nourish, foster, adopt, raise, and to nurture”, all of which have virtues and intrinsic qualities derived from Māori values, practices and ways of being and making meaning (Keane, 2011). Whāngai also means to provide for, to sustain, to care for and to be hospitable. Based within Māori ways of being, and an inherent understanding of mana tamaiti, whāngai is not a ‘formal’ adoption and is generally not recognised by New Zealand law (Keane, 2011).

A customary practice, whāngai is about fostering or adopting close kin, who are almost always related by blood. Professor Rangi Mātāmua explains that:

Whāngai is not a new concept to Māori. Māori have many ideas and thoughts in relation to whāngai and its impact on the individual, the whānau and collective. The most important aspect for Māori is ensuring the child is nurtured in a safe and loving environment; me poipoi i te tamaiti, whether the child is a whāngai or your actual child. While this might not deal to all of the issues that whāngai have, it does support them to develop in life.

(R. Matāmua, personal communications to V. Perkins, October 27, 2009)

Whāngai means literally to feed or nourish. However, the Māori customary practice of whāngai significantly differs from adoption or foster care, implying that the child is being nurtured, supported, receiving affection, cultural instruction, and sustenance in ways that acknowledge the inherent tapu of tamariki (McRae & Nikora, 2006). Although colonisation has posed significant challenges to traditional practices, whāngai, like many other cultural practices has remained active in whānau Māori. The whāngai system of customary adoption was banned by the Native Land Act 1909, but many Māori children continued to be raised by adults other than their birth parents (Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa, 2020). In contemporary contexts, the government acknowledges whāngai, stating (emphasis added):

Whāngai usually involves a child being raised by *its* whānau or extended family. Often, it means placing a child with *its* grandparents — but *it* could also be another family member, or someone unrelated. It can be a short-term, long-term or permanent arrangement. Whāngai is informal. A whāngai placement is arranged directly between the birth parents and the mātua whāngai (the family who will raise the child). Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children do not need to be involved and the birth parents are still the child’s legal guardians. In most cases whāngai takes place at birth, but it can also involve older children. A whāngai child usually knows *its* birth parents and has an ongoing relationship with them.

(Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa, 2020)

While the above paragraph acknowledges whāngai and their whānau, extended family, grandparents, and birth parents, I wish to question and highlight the use of the word ‘its’ in three occurrences, and ‘it’ in one occurrence in the first paragraph, which refers to “another family member or someone unrelated”. What or who is an ‘**its**’? To whom does ‘**its**’ belong? ‘**Its**’ does not acknowledge the human factor, it is not identifiable, nor is ‘**its**’ inclusive. This language works to dehumanise whāngai children and undermine the legitimacy of whāngai practices and the aroha that is fostered within these relationships. Whereas if ‘its’ was to be replaced by ‘their’, and if ‘it’ was to be replaced by ‘he’, ‘she’ or ‘they’, the Crown would send a very different message about whāngai practices and the significance to whānau Māori. Similarly, the use of the word ‘informal’ suggests that whāngai arrangements are less serious than other practices. When we understand the significance of whakapapa as the basis for whāngai, we must also understand that whāngai arrangements are formal processes coupled with an expectation on the whāngai parents to provide nourishment for their tamaiti and to acknowledge the whakapapa between and across all involved.

What is whāngai adoption and how is it different from other types of adoption?

Whāngai is a distinctly Māori process that ensures tamariki are raised with whānau members, within their own hapū and iwi to ensure no cultural violence is encountered and that the tamariki are empowered to grow up as active members of their hapori (Malcolm, 2010). This process is recognised by the Crown with regard to succession to Māori land and parental leave, however, is held distinct by the Crown as “a care arrangement not a legal status”, meaning legal guardianship rights remain with birth parents rather than whāngai parents and that whāngai children cannot challenge a Will under the Family Protection Act (Community Law, 2023).

Within Aotearoa, we have multiple types of “formal care arrangements” under the Adoption Act 1955, for example, parenting orders, adoption, and special guardianship. Not only are these care arrangements distinct from each other, but legally recognised in ways that whāngai is not. The Adoption Act 1955 provides the legal background for adoption in New Zealand, concretising the role of the Court in dictating appropriate whānau contexts (Adoption Act 1955). Adoption through the Courts not only confers legal guardianship on adoptive parents but severs the kinship links between biological whānau members (Perkins, 2009). Further, Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993, asserted that adopted children should automatically be granted succession to Māori land, whereas whāngai children could only be granted succession upon consultation with whānau, hapū and iwi. As of 2020, nearly 30 years after the original legislation, this was amended to ensure whāngai children could be included in succession processes (Te Kooti Whenua Māori, 2021).

Adoption differs from whāngai in many ways. Whāngai centres the mana of children, their significance as members of a collective, and their right to flourish. In contrast, it is only recently that state adoption reform initiatives suggest adoption should also become child-centred, to ensure tamariki are supported in being able to connect to their birth family, and have access to their birth records and culture (Ministry of Justice, 2022). It is now recognised that adoption law within Aotearoa is not fit for purpose and does not meet the rights of children in the same ways that whāngai practices do (Ministry of Justice, 2022). This reflects the different understandings of whānau that underpin whāngai in comparison to our existing Adoption Act.

Whāngai is undertaken with whānau involvement – where whānau members come to collective agreement about the treatment, care, and protection of tamariki, to be held and nurtured within the fulness of their whakapapa, identity and mātauranga. This ensures tamariki are by default held within their whakapapa, affirming birth lines and whāngai lines to secure and maintain whānau connections (McRae, & Nikora, 2006). Adoption practices depart significantly from this approach, visible in “closed” or “complete break” adoptions where secrecy was assumed superior because it was considered to give children a fresh start, where they would be able to commit to their new lives and families (Adoption NZ, 2013).

Whāngai practices create space for tamariki to be loved and cared for in-line with tikanga Māori, to ensure parents are supported in their decisions and whānau networks are held firm. To explore whāngai further, I offer two case studies. The two whāngai stories that follow involve two members of our immediate whānau – Rongomaiwahine Hinewehi Waimana Hamlin and David Fitzgerald Rimiteriu Marshall.

Whāngai Case-Study No. 1: Rongomaiwahine Hinewehi Waimana Hamlin

Our daughter, Rongomaiwahine Hinewehi Waimana Hamlin, is our only whāngai. She is ours through the customary Māori practice of whāngai, which is where a child is raised by someone other than their birth parents – usually a relative.

The call

It all started in September 1998, with a phone-call.

The call : From “out of the blue”

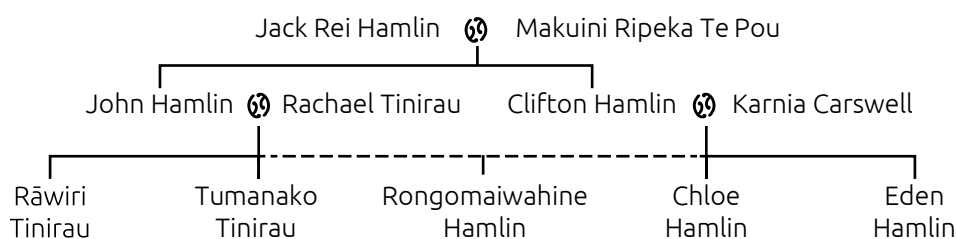
The time : Approximately 12.30pm

The date : Friday 28 September 1998

The callers : Clifton Hamlin, and his partner, Karnia Carswell

The kaupapa : Clifton – “We are having another baby girl in February – do you want it?”

The reply : (Shocked and teary-eyed) “Want it? Of course we’ll have her!”



Whakapapa connections between the whānau tūturu and whānau whāngai of Rongomaiwahine Hamlin.

It was an answer to my prayers, and a surprise for my husband, John Hamlin. During that conversation though, the wairua gave her special names – Rongomaiwahine Hinewehi – I would keep these to myself for now. We had no idea that they were expecting, and although we were excited, we were also wondering whether they would really go through with it.

Our two sons, Rāwiri and Tumanako, and I had visited the birthparents in January, just to see how everything was going. It was during this time that Karnia revealed to us that she was on the methadone programme and that our baby girl may be affected. I admitted to Karnia that I had no idea what methadone was, and so she explained it to us. Methadone is a substitute for heroin and is commonly used in our country’s drug-treatment programme. Karnia would visit a specific chemist every morning, where she would enter a special room, to receive and swallow her dose of methadone. She told me too that the staff had to ensure that all those who went there, actually swallowed their dose.

At that time Karnia was on 120 millilitres and was on a count-down, which meant that she was decreasing her dosage on a regular basis. Before going to the chemist, she would be lethargic, apathetic and clammy to the touch. After taking her dose, she was back to normal – which meant she could buzz around her mother's house doing housework in a hyperactive fashion. On our return home to Wellington, I suggested to my husband John that we make it our business to learn more about methadone and its effects.

Five months later...

Our baby girl arrived! The phone rang at 6.30am on 19 February 1999 – it was Clifton, who told us that our 7lb 4oz (3.28kg), 49.5cm long baby girl was born at 6.05am in the front seat of their car, which was parked at the hospital! The hospital doors were locked, and there was little time, as baby came quickly. John arranged some leave, while I was frantically packing! So excited! We then set off to Hastings Hospital.

Her parents were waiting for us. When we arrived, they took us to our baby girl who was in the special care baby unit incubator. She was the biggest baby, and she was screaming her lungs out, as though in great pain and agony.

Her parents had made the nursing staff aware of our connection and arrangements, then left us to it. We assumed our roles as her parents. It was an experience that I will never forget. Our innocent baby was born affected – she was addicted to methadone, and the other substances that her birthmother had been using. She was going through withdrawal – cold turkey – she was suffering greatly. Ka nui te aroha me te mamae mō tā māua nei pēpē.

We were constantly at her side – sometimes feeling quite helpless. Our minds and hearts were in turmoil. When we felt that she was being looked after by a kind nurse, we would return to our hospital accommodation at 11pm, and then return to her bedside at 7am. During these screaming bouts, we could not console her at all – it seemed that she would look beyond us, and could possibly see demons. Or was she in extreme pain? Her scores were very high.

At three days old, she was given her first dose of morphine, via mouth. The doctor had told us that morphine belonged to the same opiate family as heroin and that it would help make it easier for our baby during withdrawal. She did become more unsettled during this period.

At 5 days old, she took her first airplane ambulance trip to Wellington Hospital – and immediately from there, went via ambulance to the special care unit at the Hutt Hospital. Over the following five weeks, the staff continued to dose our daughter with morphine, in reduced dosage strengths. She still continued to have withdrawal symptoms – these were fewer in number, but the intensity of her reactions remained.

We were given a checklist (that was all it was to us at that time); however, my 175.306 Assessment of Individual Differences (Massey University) course had alerted me to what it really was. It was a clinical scoring chart, which listed a number of withdrawal symptoms that we had to monitor and score alongside each one as it occurred. The chart included tremors, irritability, hypertonicity (extreme muscular or arterial tension), hyperactivity, vomiting, high-pitched cry, respiratory distress, fever, diarrhoea, convulsions, hiccupping, sneezing, sweating, a tremendous urge to suck, and inconsolable bouts. The scores ranged from 0 (absent), 1 (mild), 2 (severe) and 4-5 (consider treatment).



On the day of her release from the Hutt Hospital, her paediatrician assured us that our daughter probably wouldn't have any more withdrawal problems. How wrong he was! On mentioning her continued withdrawal behaviour at her six-week check-up, we were offered the drug treatment that Hutt Valley Health used for drug-addicted babies at that time. It was a tranquilliser that would have kept our baby subdued and in 'lala-land'. We kindly refused the doctor's offer, and just loved and prayed her through it.

Although her 'turns' had died down, these had not died out. Some of the effects were replaced with others, like learning and concentration difficulties, anxiety attacks, and episodes of hyperactivity. She relied on a pacifier, called 'didi', and also my homemade quilt where she would rub the edges 'to death'.

Fit, active and engaged

From her first birthday, Rongomaiwahine has participated in various activities including kapa haka, at the annual Hui Aranga, an Easter celebration of Māori Catholics, held at various locations around the country.



Rongomaiwahine Hamlin, at her first Hui Aranga, in April 2000, at Mt Maunganui College, Tauranga. She is performing for Ngā Karere, a Wellington-based Māori Catholic Club. Photograph courtesy of Vince Heperi collection.

We would always take our girl to visit her birth parents, her grandparents, and her great grandmother, all of whom lived in Napier. On one lovely occasion, her birthmother Karnia, and her Nanny Lynn Carswell came to visit her at our home, in Wainuiomata! While she slept, we discussed our daughter over lunch. Our baby must have heard us talking about her because she woke up, and her Nanny Lynn went to get her out of her cot. I took photos of Nanny Lynn holding her; her mummy was chuffed that our babygirl was doing well.

Sadly, when Rongomaiwahine was three years old (2002), her birth mummy Karnia passed away due to violent circumstances:

Ms Carswell, 28, was stabbed to death by her boyfriend, Danny Mayes, on May 22, 2002, at his Napier flat...Mayes later pleaded guilty to murder and was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment, with a non-parole period of eight years. That was later changed to life imprisonment following an appeal.

(Hawke's Bay Today, 2005)

To me, Karnia's passing was the saddest tangihanga ever. E Karnia – moe mai rā i tō moengaroa.

Rongomaiwahine attended Arakura Kindergarten which was a hop, skip and a jump around the corner from our home. Her best friend was Drew Meiklejohn whose very fair mother was from Whakatāne (Mataatua waka); as was Rongomaiwahine. Drew's mum, Barbara, and I concluded that is why they played so well together, because they are related.

One day, Rongomaiwahine and I went to Pito One (Petone Beach) to gather pipi, and pick mussels from under the pier. A photographer – Keri Stent of Sunday Star Times – asked if he could take photos of Rongomaiwahine running along the beach.



Rongomaiwahine Hamlin running along Pito One. Photograph courtesy of the Sunday Star Times.

He also asked a woman if he could borrow her (much younger) son to accompany Rongomaiwahine – to which she agreed. So our girl had to actually pull the little boy alongside her because he was unfit and his legs kept collapsing. A story, on Māori and Pākehā relations, featuring this photo, appeared in the Sunday Star Times.

In February 2004, Rongomaiwahine started at Ss. Peter and Paul School in Lower Hutt. Initially we would drop her off on our way to work and university, and I would pick her up at 3pm. One day, we decided to give her bus money (\$10) to catch the bus home. I was home by 3:15pm and expected her to turn up soon. Twenty minutes later, she rang me from the school. She wanted me to pick her up. I asked her about her bus money. She had spent the bus money buying ice-creams for her and her school mates! I went to pick her up, and bought her a ten-trip bus ticket!

At seven years of age, she is healthy, loving, and has always led a very active lifestyle – ballet, gymnastics, netball, swimming, also horse-riding down at the Jackson’s NuiWai Farm. At school, she loved music and singing; she was also enthusiastic about playing her recorder and her (green) guitar.



Members of the Nutcracker Suite with Rongomaiwahine Hamlin, and her school friend, Adriella. Photographs courtesy of the Tinirau-Hamlin whānau.



Rongomaiwahine Hamlin, with her Ponga godparents and whānau, at her baptism and First Holy Communion – Ss. Peter & Paul’s Church, Lower Hutt. Back: Merekānara and Hoani Ponga. Front: Te Poutahi Ponga, Te Rangtautahi Ponga, Tawaroa Ponga, Ngakura Ponga, Rongomaiwahine Hamlin, Ngarongokaumoana Ponga. Photograph courtesy of the Tinirau-Hamlin whānau.



Establishing our whānau trust

Fast forward to 2000, my mother, Regina Tinirau (who had suffered a stroke and lost the use of the right side of her body, which affected her speech), my two siblings Raphael, Esther and I held a meeting at our parent's home regarding setting up a whānau trust, under Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993. I suggested that we call our whānau trust, Mana Whenua Whānau Trust, which was accepted. Trustees were myself, my brother Raphael, and my sister Esther. At that time, our youngest (whāngai) brother, David, and his family were living in England, so we included him and his children in our trust all the same. We were about to end our meeting, and Mum pointed to Rongomaiwahine, then she patted her heart – she was insistent – then we clicked. Mum wanted to include her new mokopuna in our whānau trust. We all agreed except for my husband John, who was not happy about that.

Rongomaiwahine slept beside me until she was 12 years old, so my husband had to sleep in her bedroom. Every now and then, I would ask her to move to her own bedroom, and her responses were “Oh that's for the visitors, Mum” or “Dad likes sleeping in my bed”!

From the Hawke's Bay to Whakatāne

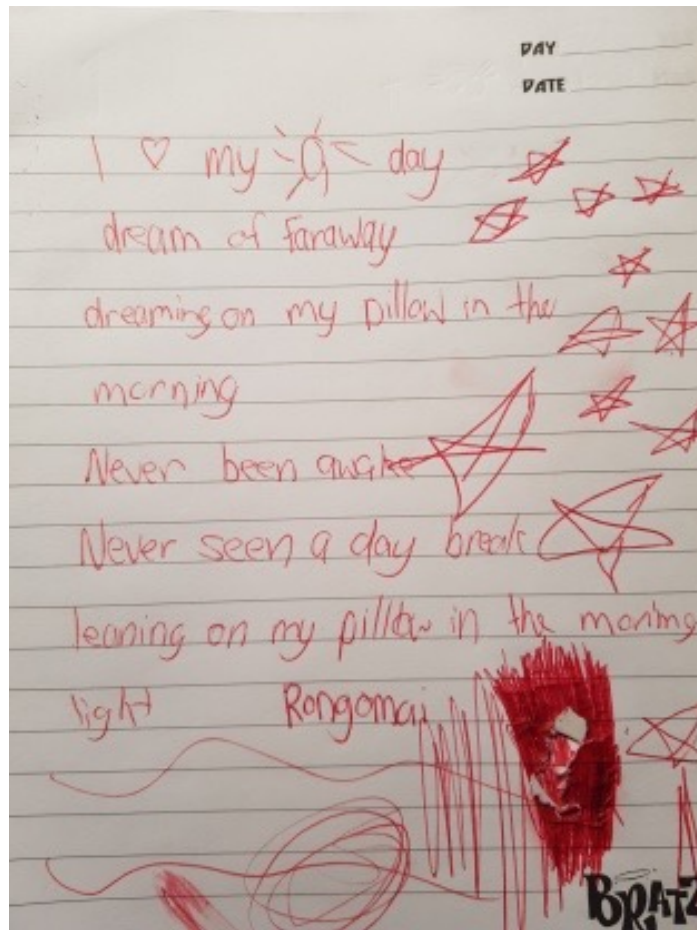
Rongomaiwahine spent three years at St. Joseph's Māori Girls College in Napier. We thought she went there to eat her lunch, however, the Principal, Miss Georgina Kingi, advised that our daughter was getting assistance and doing well. Nevertheless, in her third year, she and one of her classmates were accused of stealing food from someone else's locker. So we met with the school board, and our daughter and her friend had to find other accommodation. Thankfully, Nanny Jody Cotter (who worked in the school laundry) offered to have our girl stay with her and her family.



Rongomaiwahine Hamlin, and Georgina Kingi (Principal), at St. Joseph's Māori Girls' College, Greenmeadows, Napier. Photograph courtesy of the Tinirau-Hamlin whānau.

For Year 12, Rongomaiwahine moved by her big brother Rāwiri whose home was in Whakatāne. We enrolled her at Trident High School, bought her uniforms, and the teachers helped her to sort out her subjects and timetable. She got a part-time job working at the local McDonalds. She had befriended a young woman who had a major influence on her. She was skipping classes, and not handing in her homework. Both she and her friend were creating major mischief together.





Our whāngai daughter is a poetess. Poem by Rongomaiwahine Hamlin.



Rānana Marae team that participated on Marae Kai Masters, 2015. From left to right: Rāwiri Tinirau, Tumanako Tinirau, Rongomaiwahine Hamlin, and John Hamlin. Photograph courtesy of Marae Kai Masters.

At 16 years of age, Rongomaiwahine, her father John, and her two older brothers, Rāwiri and Tumanako, participated

in Marae Kai Masters, a Māori Television cooking competition. She was a big help to our Rānana Marae team, even though she thought she was a “slave”! Stiff competition, blood, sweat and tears all around. At the end of the competition, they won this series of Marae Kai Masters by one point.

Whakapapa connections

In 2011, we went to Te Matatini National Kapa Haka Festival held at Gisborne’s Waiohika Estate Vineyard, as Rāwiri was performing for an Aotea team, Ngā Purapura o Te Taihauāuru. We had booked into a holiday home for the week. I had planned to go to the Māori Land Court to research my Tairāwhiti whakapapa.

I discovered that Rongomaiwahine and I descend from Rongowhakaata, and that my tipuna, Tuta Te Kuri, was an owner in the Kopututea No.1 block (now aggregated with Kopututea No. 2 block). I also found that Rongomaiwahine’s tipuna, Meihana Kaimoana, was in the same block. Is it possible that we could be related? We decided to visit the Kopututea No.1 block, located past the main beach. It was a sunny day, and the tide was going out, so Rongomaiwahine and I ran along the sandy beach, went into the shallows, and we took everything in. Feeling satisfied, we slowly walked back to the car. Ngā mihi nui ki ō māua nei tīpuna!

Moving out and growing up

Rongomaiwahine found jobs quite easily. She was employed at our local McDonald’s (Wainuiomata), and she would often fill in for other staff. She moved to Palmerston North, and she flatted with a woman who worked for Feilding’s Innovation Freezing Works company. Rongomaiwahine applied, was interviewed and was taken on almost immediately. She was working in the chillers. Sadly she lasted until her first big payday and then she went underground.

Our whāngai daughter has put us through many challenges – too numerous to mention. Needless to say, some of it involved the other side of the law. We found out though that Rongomaiwahine has returned to her birth father Clifton, his partner Selena, and her two older sisters Chloe and Eden. Both she and Chloe were working. Every now and then I think of her, and when I watch the Marae Kai Masters series reruns, I feel so proud of her.

So that ends this kōrero about our whāngai daughter. Although there have been many hurdles thus far, we’ve taken it on the chin and moved on. We are free and loving life!

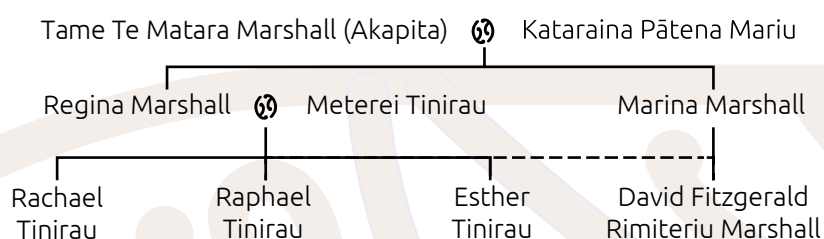
Update: Rongomaiwahine is now living in Gore, and has two gorgeous girls. John and I had the privilege of spending some time with her growing whānau last year, and look forward to hearing how our baby girl and mokopuna are doing!

Whāngai Case-Study No. 2: David Fitzgerald Rimiteriu Marshall



Marina Esther Te Huataka Marshall. Photograph courtesy of the Marshall-Tinirau whānau.

Our Aunty Marina Marshall has been involved with our whānau since we were littlies. She was a sister to our mother, Regina. Aunty Marina's career lay in psychiatric nursing, which took her as far north as Auckland, and as far south as Wellington; her last post was at the Porirua Psychiatric Hospital, where she became sister in charge. Until her retirement, Aunty was in charge of Nairn ward. On our visits, I became fascinated by the people that she nursed and cared for in her ward, which years later, inspired me to learn more about social psychology and psychopathology.



Whakapapa connections between the whānau tūturu and whānau whāngai of David Marshall.



To me, Aunty Marina was sometimes like Nanny Kataraina Marshall (née Pātena Mariu) – humble, spotless, arty-crafty, green-fingered. At other times, she was like Koro Tame Te Matara Marshall (Akapita) in showing a little stubbornness. She was also like her sisters, in that she could sing or hum a tune; yet unlike some of her sisters, she had a few tricky driving tactics, which happened to match her older sister, Ina Tarihiria Peretini, to a tee!



Our brother, David Marshall, as a toddler. Photograph courtesy of the Marshall-Tinirau whānau.

Our Aunty Marina joined our immediate whānau after giving birth to our brother David. Seven months earlier, and in the same annexe, Mum had given birth to our nine-pound sister, Esther, so it was a busy time, boiling cotton nappies in the huge copper, the water for which was heated by a small fire, followed by washing the cotton nappies in the agitator washing machine, then rinsing these in Bluo in a concrete tub, and using the ringer (this sat above washing machine bowl) to squeeze the excess water back into the tub. By the time the nappies were hung out to dry on long lines, they were as white as snow. My brother, Raphael, liked experimenting with the ringer – watching Mum’s wooden spoon being expelled to the other side, then when he got older, he put his hand in, then reversed it out – then he tried his arm in the rollers – just as well there was an automatic release as well as the reverse option!

Back in those days, baby bottles were made of glass, which were sterilised by boiling. I cannot recall tins of powder milk, but I do remember warmed unpasteurised cow’s milk. I also remember Mum grumbling about Aunty Marina for overfeeding Dave – as every time he opened his eyes or would whimper, Aunty would feed him a bottle of milk! Poor Dave – he would get bloated, have trouble bringing up his wind, and then, he would cry.

As Aunty Marina’s maternity leave was coming to an end, our Dad, Meterei, asked her for David, to which she agreed – she was then free to return to her psychiatric nursing career. Mum was both pleased and relieved – in no time at all, she had both babies in a routine, and would sometimes have both babies at her breasts. What a relief, Dave was wind-free!

Aunty would utilise her furlough to travel home, sometimes to Mum's dismay, as she would stay long enough to get our brother Dave out of his routine, and while she was at it, upset his tummy, then go back to work! As our brother got older, at certain times, he would suddenly get sick with the snuffles or something similar, and, as sure as eggs, it heralded Aunty Marina coming home for the weekend.

At every opportunity, Dave would help Dad on the farm; he would often run alongside the truck or car, just for the sake of it! This would put him in good stead for athletic sports later on, when he followed our brother Raphael to Hato Paora College, in Feilding.

Aunty Marina introduced and spoilt us with chocolates, bought biscuits, and cooked chicken takeaways. This was unheard of in our home, as Mum Regina was a true home-maker – her baking, cooking, preserving, knitting, sewing and re-purposing skills were amazing. Aunty Marina was family-famous for her natural remedies for any ailing part of the body, inside or out, which invariably involved two key ingredients – lemon and vinegar.

Ngutuwera, near Waverley in South Taranaki, was considered 'home' to us until 1973, when our family left the farm, and moved to Charwell Place, Highbury, Palmerston North. Dad had secured a livestock officer/inspector role with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, which took him to different farms in the Manawatū region, and later on, to Dunedin, Matiu/Somes Island, Mana Island, and Wellington. Mum too was fortunate. By day, she was a data entry operator at State Services Commission, and to help put us through boarding school, Mum became an evening cleaner at the Palmerston North Hospital.

When Mr and Mrs Lupton retired, they sold both their Springbank Trust (Ngutuwera) and Lupton – McNab farms. They then downsized to a small sheep farm near Bulls, which was not far from Palmerston North. It was a lovely coincidence that the Lupton couple moved there. This is where Dave would spend some of his school holidays, staying at and helping Mr Lupton. As a whānau, we would help at docking time. One time though, Dave had to act quickly to save Mr Lupton's life – Roland was a haemophiliac (where blood clotting is impaired) – he had dropped to the floor in the woolshed. Dave propped him up, and he 'ran for his life' to get the injection; flew past Mrs Lupton, found it, administered it, and saved the day.

Dad would also spend some weekends helping them to catch up and help out with farm work (including docking, crutching, drenching, shearing and maintenance), and would inevitably bring home a pet lamb or two for Dave and our sister Esther, to feed and look after. This usually lasted until Christmas Eve morning, when we would wake to find Lambie's carcass prepped and airing in the poplar tree! It put me off eating lamb – I would stick with pork and veges!

During Dave's Takaro School and Monrad Intermediate years, he would rise daily at 4:30 am, and would cycle to and muck out at the Awapuni stables. Dave was always sporty, playing soccer and softball at the weekends. He was, and still is, a great imitator, and would have us all roaring with laughter. He liked to make car and gear change sounds whenever he was walking/changing directions around the house.

Dave spent four years at Hato Paora College, where he excelled at sport. During his final secondary year at Awatapu College, he decided on an army career. When he had his passing out parade at Waiōuru, our Marshall whānau came to support and celebrate Dave's achievements.





Members of the Marshall whānau with David Marshall, Passing Out Parade, Waiōuru. Photograph courtesy of Marshall-Tinirau whānau.



Marina Marshall, Ina Peretini, Regina Tinirau, Sonya Daly, Beatrice Daly, Mary Wake, at David Marshall's Passing Out Parade, Waiōuru. Photograph courtesy of Marshall-Tinirau whānau.

David's post-boarding-school training and super fitness saw him through his years with both domestic and foreign deployments and opportunities. Meanwhile, our quietly proud Aunty Marina would mark her son's world-wide trails on the world-map in her kitchen.

His marriage to Sandra (Sandy) Karen Pollock, and the arrivals of their children, Thomas and Keri, brought great joy to both our parents and Aunty Marina, especially when our wee British-born mokopuna enjoyed lamb tails, tuna, boil-up and kaimoana on their visit home!



Sandy and David Marshall home for Mum (Regina's) 70th birthday in 2002. Photograph courtesy of the Marshall-Tinirau whānau.

Years later and while still working overseas, David met an amazing Spanish woman, by the name of Beatriz (Bea) Gonzalez Garcia. Her whānau are owners of shoe and restaurant businesses. She took our brother home to meet her family, and Dave immediately warmed to them.



David Marshall and Bea Gonzalez Garcia. Photograph courtesy of the Marshall-Tinirau whānau.

When he finished with international deployments, he returned to his 50 acre farm, some of which he subdivided and sold, and kept the remainder.

Bea and Dave have two amazing sons, Diégo and Lucas, who love to hunt, fish, and gather seafood. They are creative, hilarious, and are free spirits! Every year during our winter season, Bea and her sons return to Spain – happy reunions!





Diégo and Lucas Marshall. Photograph courtesy of the Marshall-Tinirau whānau.

Update: Our brother David has additions to our whānau – our mokopuna Beau Leo Marshall Sloss and Rocky Alexander Te Āiorangi Marshall Sloss, to Keri and her partner, Johnny Alexander Sloss. Also, David and Bea have relocated to Taupō, and are learning te reo Māori and connecting with our Ngāti Tūwharetoa whānau.

Response from David Marshall: My own early childhood memories of being a whāngai child is that Meterei and Regina were my Mum and Dad, so from birth to about 4 years of age, I was bonded to them like any new born child and they were my Mum and Dad – that’s it. From around 4 years, that’s when I realised I had two Mums, because I remember Rachael, Raphael and Esther calling my Mum (Marina) ‘Aunty’, and that didn’t seem right. One day, when everyone was at school, I asked Mum (Regina) why everyone is calling my other Mum (Marina) ‘Aunty’? Mum (Regina) then explained to me that my mother, Marina, was my birth mother and that they were sisters. In western terms, she (Regina) was actually my Aunty. Being 4 years of age, I cheekily suggested to Mum (Regina) that I’d have to call her Aunty from now on. She replied, “If you do, it’s off to Porirua with you.” It was all done with tongue and cheek. So from then until now, I was fortunate enough to have had two Mums, for which I will be forever grateful.

He kupu whakakapi: Conclusion

For our whānau, whāngai has given us an opportunity to keep expanding and building upon our whakapapa. My whāngai brother and daughter shared many journeys with us, finding new ways of being and making meaning, growing with one another across time. Rongomaiwahine, our whāngai daughter gave us many challenges, but so too brought us many proud memories. We got to help shape her life and provide her with beautiful experiences as a dancer, performer, chef, poet and wahine Māori. We got to explore her whakapapa and find our shared tūpuna, to take inspiration from one another and now get to witness her life as a mother carrying our whakapapa with her into the future. David, my whāngai brother, similarly brought challenges, quirks and love. His journeys, discipline and passion took him all around the world, meeting new people and visiting new places, while holding his whakapapa firm. Just as we’ve been given the opportunity to witness Rongomaiwahine move through different phases of her life, so too have we gotten to share in David’s journeys, moving from the army to mātuatanga, and now into grandparenthood. Whāngai like adoption, provides tamariki with loving whānau, but unlike adoption, draws us together through whakapapa – recognising our connections beyond the present, drawing our tūpuna together and keeping us bound in reciprocal responsibilities. Just as whakapapa compels us to care, shelter, and lead tamariki toward flourishing, it holds those tamariki and their own uri within our ngākau and wairua. Whāngai doesn’t seek to sever connections, there is no closed adoption within whāngai. Instead, whāngai gives us an opportunity to extend and build upon whakapapa, to break down barriers between whānau and to weave together new relationships and dynamics for the benefit of all.

Kuputaka: Glossary

Use of tuhutō (macrons): the introduction of macrons over some Māori vowels, have (1) clarified definitions and (2) made it easier to pronounce Māori words (i.e., knowing where to place the emphasis as you are saying the words). When we quote sources from earlier periods where macrons have not been used, we have not included the macron to remain true to the original text. In the glossary, we have included both versions of the word (with and without macrons).

Aotea	region from Taranaki, southwards to Whanganui, inland to the Central Plateau
aroha	love
atawhai	fostered child; show kindness
E kore au e ngaro, he kakano i ruiruia mai i Rangiatea	I will not be lost, I am a seed sown from Rangiatea
hapori	society, community
hapū	cluster of extended families, descended from an eponymous ancestor
Hui Aranga	Easter celebration of Māori Catholics, held at various locations around Aotearoa
iwi	tribe
kāimoana	seafood
Ka nui te aroha me te mamae mō tā māua nei pēpē	our love and pain for our baby
kapa haka	Māori performing arts
kaupapa	topic
kōrero	discussion, stories
mana	power, status, prestige, and the potential to provide or remove benefits
Mana Island	an island of the North Island coast, situated near Porirua
mana tamaiti	the intrinsic value and inherent dignity derived from a child's or young person's whakapapa and their belonging to a whānau, hapū, and/or iwi, in accordance with tikanga Māori
Manawatū	region in the lower North Island of Aotearoa, bordered by Rangitikei, Tararua and Horowhenua districts
mātauranga	knowledge

Matiu/Somes Island	the largest of three islands in the Wellington Harbour
matuatanga	parenthood
moe mai rā i tō	rest in eternal peace
moengaroa	rest in eternal peace
mokopuna	grandchild, grandchildren
Ngā mihi nui ki ō māua nei tīpuna	thank you our tīpuna
Ngā Purapura o Te Taihauāuru	kapa haka group from the Aotea region
ngākau	heart
Ngutuwera	place near Waverley, South Taranaki
Pito One (Petone)	original name of a Hutt Valley suburb
Rānana Marae	marae located on the banks of the Whanganui River
Rongowhakaata	name of a tipuna (and iwi) from the Gisborne area
take	reason, purpose
tamaiti	child
tamariki	children
tangihanga	funeral
tapu	sacred, sanctity
Taupō	town (and lake), in the Central Plateau region
Tauranga	city in the Bay of Plenty region
taurima	to treat with care
te reo Māori	the Māori language
Te Ture Whenua Maori Act 1993	sets out the jurisdiction of the Māori Land Court and provides special rules around dealing with Māori freehold land and other types of land held by Māori
tiaki	to look after
tikanga Māori	Māori traditions
tīpuna	forebear, ancestor
tīpuna	forebears, ancestors
tuna	eel (<i>Anguilla Dieffenbachia</i> or <i>Anguilla Australis</i>)

tūpuna	forebears, ancestors
uri	descendants
wahine Māori	Māori woman
Waiōuru	small town in the Ruapehu district
wairua	spirit
whakapapa	genealogy, lineage
whakatipu	to make grow
whānau	extended family
whānau Māori	Māori families
whānau tūturu	original or birth whānau
whāngai	customary Māori adoption practice, where a child is raised by someone other than their birth parents – usually a relative or other members of their whānau child; adopted child; to feed, nourish, foster, adopt

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