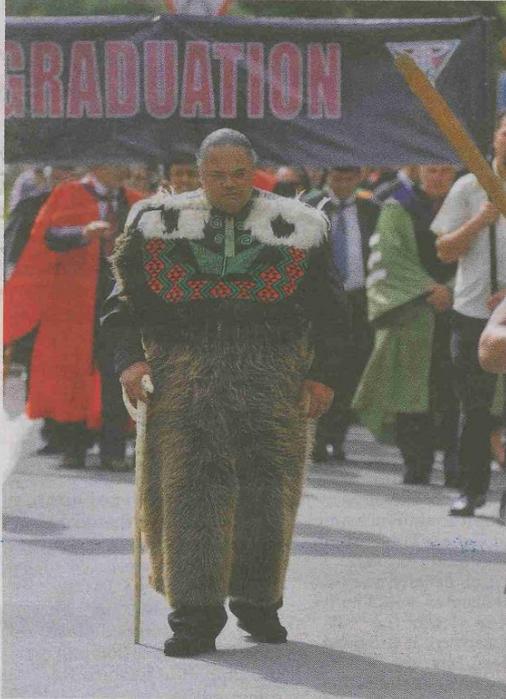


Tuhoe totara falls ahead of Te Matatini



FALLEN TOTARA: Makarini Temara, who died on Wednesday, was often a prominent figure in Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi's graduation march through The Strand in Whakatane.

Photo file

Karla Akuhata
Staff reporter

GATHERED together watching kapa haka and remembering his legacy is an apt way to send off one of Tuhoe's great cultural exponents, Te Makarini Temara

As people made their way to Hastings on Wednesday for the start of the national kapa haka competition, Te Matatini, news that Mr Temara had died was beginning to filter out.

Mr Temara was a prominent figure at Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi and a staunch supporter of Maori performing arts and the Maori language.

He was a driving force behind the Mataatua kapa haka Ruatahuna Kakahu Mauku, which has previously performed at Te Matatini, making the top six in 2007.

A member of the Tuhoe iwi, Mr Temara was active in tribal affairs and often played a key role in events such as Te Hui Ahurei a Tuhoe and the Mataatua Kapa Haka Festival.

Tamati Kruger, the chairman of Tuhoe's governance board, Te Uru Taumatua, said Mr Temara was a "plume of an albatross brushed by the mist".

"Teacher, husband, father, motivator, his music decorated our time and showed us what feelings

sound like.

E te whanau kia mau te aroha – where love is there is life," he said.

Wananga chief executive Wiremu Doherty said the institution joined with many across the country in struggling to come to terms with the devastating news of Mr Temara's passing.

"Te Makarini was a cultural icon for our institution. His humility and passion for te ao Maori and in supporting and nurturing others leaves an immense loss for us all.

"His skills and wisdom will be missed in and out of the classroom and marae."

John Te Makarini Temara, was born on December 6, 1958, and he has been a key member of Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi for almost 20 years.

A trained social worker, he first lectured in Maori studies, then went on to lecture the bachelor of matauranga Maori course. He was promoted to acting academic programme leader, Matauranga Maori, in 2006, and has continued as a lecturer and has been a strong advocate and adviser on cultural matters.

He began his PhD thesis in Maori studies last year.

Mr Temara will lie in state in the Te Whai a te Motu Tau whareniui at Mataatua Marae in Ruatahuna. He will be buried on Saturday.