

waka kuaka



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WHAKAMAUMAHARA:
TRIBUTE TO TĀ TUMU TE HEUHEU TŪKINO VIII
22 AUGUST 1941–23 SEPTEMBER 2025
PATRON OF THE POLYNESIAN SOCIETY (2008–2025)



Ka ngaro rā, ē, ngā tōtara whakahae o te wao!
Ka hakahaka koa te manu ki te rūrunga,
Ka whakamāpuna te ihu o te waka.
Ka whatiwhati koa ngā paihau o te hōkio.
Hare rā, e Pā! i runga i te au heke,
I te hurihanga o te whenua ...
Uira mai te kanapu! Uira mai te kanapu!
He tohu mō te mate nā, ī!

—He tangi mo Te Heuheu II Tūkino, nā Tōpine
Te Mamaku

Gone alas are the cherished tōtara trees of the forest!
The bird hovers o'er the sheltered nook,
Hovering at the prow of the canoe.
The wings of the hōkio* move slowly in flight.
Farewell, O sire! upon the ebbing tide,
The land is overturned ...
The lightning flashed! The lightning flashed!
It was the sign of death, alas!

—A lament for Te Heuheu II Tūkino, by Tōpine
Te Mamaku (Ngata 2006: 214, 219)

* Hōkio—a legendary omen-bird

In the March 2008 issue of the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Dame Joan Metge, as president of the Society, noted that in accepting the invitation to be a joint patron of the Polynesian Society, Tumu Te Heuheu renewed a link established by his great-grandfather Te Heuheu Tūkino V (Tureiti Te Heuheu) as one of the society's first members. The society has been greatly honoured to have had Tā Tumu as its patron from 2008 until his death in September 2025.

A quiet, unassuming, yet forceful, determined and talented leader, Tā Tumu as ariki of Ngāti Tūwharetoa guided his iwi through the iwi settlement processes as well as major social and political change. At the same time, through his involvement with the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, he exerted a profound influence on the development of policy and practice related to the cultural heritage and concerns of indigenous people at the international level. In 2005 he was awarded the honour of Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit, redesignated to knighthood in 2009.

Until Tā Tumu became involved as chairman of its World Heritage Committee in 2007, UNESCO's heritage policy had been centred around "four C's"—credibility, conservation, capacity building and communication. Tā Tumu secured the addition of a fifth "C"—communities: involving ordinary people in decision-making and governance, shifting the focus from essentially state actors to partnerships involving indigenous peoples and local living communities as well as national governments. He also advocated and secured recognition and incorporation of indigenous knowledge and values as integral parts of decision-making in cultural heritage and development planning.

One of his enduring achievements was securing UNESCO World Heritage status for Tongariro National Park, not simply for its natural landscape and conservation significance, but as a cultural site—the first site to be classified by UNESCO as a cultural landscape. He advocated strongly and successfully for the recognition that land, culture and spirituality are inseparable, and of the fundamental importance of the intangible values that are associated with geographical areas and physical sites.

Throughout his life Tā Tumu was active on many fronts connected with advancing the welfare of Māori people and in the promotion of Māori and indigenous knowledge, worldviews and values. These included his advocacy for the Ahuwhenua Trophy for excellence Māori farming and horticulture and the convening of several pan-Māori gatherings to discuss pressing issues of the day, something for which his status and work as ariki of a major iwi had made him well prepared. He was also a tireless advocate of the restoration of Tongariro National Park to Tūwharetoa kaitiakitanga, something which the iwi had lost when the Tongariro National Park Act was passed in 1893. This would incorporate UNESCO's "fifth C" into the park's governance. Tā Tumu did much to ensure that a Māori worldview should influence decision-

making and policy on heritage issues and beyond at the local, national and international levels. This is a legacy which will long outlast his passing.

Moe mai rā e Pā i te korowai o te aroha, ā kia whiti ki ā koe
te māramatanga mutunga kore.

Richard A. Benton
Past President, The Polynesian Society

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