

the community rather than speak out of turn. He thinks he was too conservative in his approach but is sure his successor, Pou Temara, will do a great job. Bill says there are also Maori people now within broadcasting who are not slow to speak their mind, and that is a good thing.

Many pakeha may be unaware that Bill Kerekere has been equally known in the Maori world for his action song compositions and choreography.

Bill got into composing whilst at Wae-renga-a-hika College, Te Rau. He says the cultural group ran out of songs so he used someone else's songs and put words to them. From this beginning Bill progressed to working with Tuini Ngawai and Te Kani Te Ua.

In 1953 at a welcome to Queen Elizabeth in Rotorua, the use of pakeha tunes and Maori words came under fire by the world media. For a 1963 welcome to the Queen by Taitokerau, Bill helped select songs that were used at successive royal welcomes in 70 and 74.

Bill says there was a shortage of original compositions then.

However he says now there are many good composers from Sharples, Wehi, Ponika, Katene, George Vernon, Melbourne, Vicky Ward to the late Pewhairangi/Prime with 'Poi-e'.

Bill says that the twenty most noted original composers today are equal in quality to anyone of the past.

"Modern action songs allow for as much creativity, with people like Peter Sharples right up to date. His action song based on space invaders was the best I saw at the last polynesian festival."

In Bill's opinion the higher standard of compositions and performing was epitomised by the group that opened Te Maori in New York, rehearsed by Napi Waaka and Bub Wehi, the group had not one pakeha song.

And it's people overseas who've benefited from Bill Kerekere's natural ability to co-ordinate and choreograph Maori concert groups. The highlight for Bill was the organising of the Maori presence representing New Zealand at the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane a couple of years ago.

Not only did he have little funds but also a scarcity of Maori performers. The funds arrived late, and the performers he recruited from the Maori population in Australia. To make ends meet says Bill, they did a few concerts in the malls. The main event went very successfully, he said.

Looking back over his lengthy time with broadcasting, Bill has a chuckle or two about 'production hitches'. Like keeping track of 30 staff at King Koroki's tangihanga and not spotting the camera man perched up a tree in the pouring rain with his hat on. And the time when the recording crew were told to pack their gear and get off the marae. Fortunately it was a visitor who gave

the order and he was over-ruled by the tangata whenua. Unfortunately all the gear had been dismantled by that time.

Bill aims to use his retirement to write up his experiences, compose songs and poetry, and do the garden.

Bill says his father was known as the 'kumara king' and he'd like to follow on. And he'll continue the Kerekere tradi-

tion by serving on the 120,000 acre Mangatu Incorporation, one of the biggest farming concerns in the country.

Bill says his father gave 34 years of service to it, his father 30 years and his father....

But Bill says because of his time away in broadcasting he'll be starting from scratch.



## He Whakatau

Kua tae nei ki te wa e huri aia nga aro o maua me taku rangatira ki te wa kainga, ki Turanganui-A-Kiwa ki te Tairāwhiti, te turangawaewae, me puta aku whakatau whakamihi ki nga iwi ki nga marae ki nga huihuinga tini maha o te motu i tu aia au i roto i aku mahi i nga tau tini maha ka hipa nei ki muri — mai i Te Rerenga Wairua ki te Hiku O Te Ika, ki Te Taihauauru, ki Te Kuku O Te Ika-A-Mauī, huri atu ki Te Tairāwhiti, whiti atu i Te Moana O Raukawa ki nga rohe katoa o Te Waipounamu ki Murihiku ki Rakiuru, oti ra ki Aotearoa whanui. Te na koutou nga kaumatua rangatira, nga poutokomanawa o nga iwi, ki nga kaihautu, nga rangatahi. Te na koutou te na koutou katoa. Ko te whakamutunga ano ko te tangata whenua tuturu o Te Whanganui-A-Tara, Te Atiawa, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Toa Rangatira, aku whakaruruhau i nga tau tini i okioki aia ki roto i a koutou i Poneke, ara, i Te Upoko-O-Te-Ika. Ki te maha i tuhi reta mai, i tuku taonga koha aroha mai kia maua ko taku hoa rangatira, e mihi ana ra i runga tonu i te aroha nui. Kia ora koutou katoa.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Now that I and my wife return to our tribal home district, sunny Gisborne on the East, I wish to express gratitude to the many tribes of maoridom who over many years have helped, assisted me in every way, on many many marae, at numerous hui gatherings, from the Far North throughout the western and east coasts through the central North Island across Cook Strait, down through the land of the greenstone to Stewart Island. My appreciation and sincere thanks, to the noble elders, the marae homefolk, and the younger generation. Specific thanks to the tangata whenua of Wellington district, where we have lived the past 20 years, Te Atiawa, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Toa Rangatira, who have cared and looked after us well at "The Head Of The Fish". To the many people Maori and pakeha who have written to us, and for the numerous gifts which have been given to us, please accept our humble and sincere thanks. Sincere thanks for your aroha — greetings and salutations to you all.

Na te pononga na,

Wiremu Kingi-Kerekere  
Mihiaata Parata-Kerekere