

Dear Philip

This information may be of interest to you and your readers.

For my three younger sisters and myself, fashion designing has become a family affair.

It all started six months ago, when I heard about the "Te Kopu Fashion Awards" and told my sisters Anne and Bernice Haenga of Linden and Pam Keil of Porirua, that we should enter. From that, Anne won the knitwear section. My three garments were shown on television on two separate occasions. These garments then travelled down to Christchurch where they were included in a fashion parade and a photo appeared on the front page of the Christchurch Star.

Our garments were also on display during the "Te Maori" exhibition. A couple of months ago, I designed another three garments and entered these into the Benson and Hedges Fashion Design awards which took place on March 12 at the Michael Fowler Centre.

One of my designs, a black and red leather dress, appeared in the "High lights Parade".

My unsuccessful handknitted woolen two piece entry was modelled on a Maori theme. Again red and black with black tassels and red/black feathers. I sent a bone carved hook and earrings and asked for an ethnic model. The judges sent their special commendation for that entry. My evening wear entry was similar to one that made the finals.

We are now looking to go further,



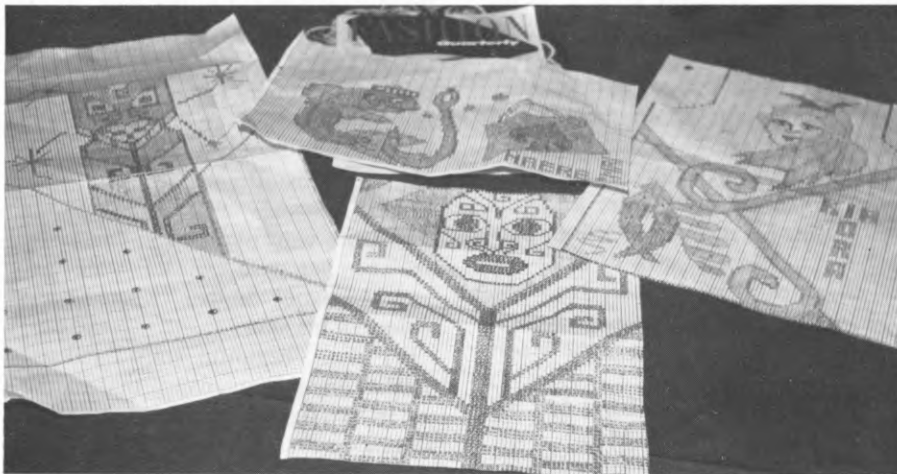
Our garments modelled at "Te Maori". Rhonda, Pam, with my daughter Renaye, Anne and Bernice.

and have employed women to knit our designs which are mostly Maori.

We are currently looking into opening a small shop, (money being a bit of a problem.)

Our label will read "Exclusive New Zealand handknits by Haenga Design". We are of the Ngati Porou tribe and came from Tikitiki, a tiny settlement on the East Coast, which our family still farms.

Yours sincerely  
Maria Wilson



Some of my graphs which are transformed into knitwear.



One of my garments; named "Te Taniwha" – the river mermaid, modelled by Sandra Thompson of Titahi Bay.