Kia Ora DC Kiwis
Highlights from Tuku Iho

Susan Olsen, Tasha Wood Martin, Sarah Vella, Michael Early, Kelly Wilson, Rachel Gresson, Belinda Tibbles, Sarah Greathead, Richard and Sally McGeorge and a Tuku Iho performer.

Tuku Iho has big impact in DC
A 9 day long exhibition of Maori arts and culture has a huge impact on Kiwis living in the Washington DC region.

Organized through a collaboration between the NZ Embassy in Washington DC, the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and the New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, the exhibition Tuku Iho was an amazing opportunity for many local Kiwis.
Kia Ora DC Kiwis Community turned out in force for the Tuku Iho: Living Legacy exhibition at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in July. The Community hosted two coffee events in front of the museum before the opening on the two Sundays that the exhibition was in DC. Both events saw a large turnout of local Kiwis and those further afield as well as a mix of new and existing members of the community. Thank you to all for participating. We have prepared this update to share some of the highlights of the exhibition.

President Grant Boyd and Treasurer Leonie Boyd represented Kia Ora DC Kiwis at the opening of Tuku Iho at the Smithsonian and Board members Alby McIlroy and Miriama Patterson attended the closing powhiri and handover of the waka to the museum.

Kia Ora DC Kiwis also organized a koha to present to Tuku Iho on the final day. This was presented by Kapa Haka Leader Miriama Patterson and was reciprocated by the group. The final total for online contributions to the koha was $500, which includes a contribution of t-shirts and hats from our Kia Ora DC Kiwis merchandise up to a value of $100USD. The gift given in reciprocation to Kia Ora DC Kiwis by Tuku Iho was incorporated into the raffle prizes at our annual hangi. The proceeds of the raffle support the work of Kia Ora DC Kiwis. Kia Ora to all of the community members who either donated online, donated items in person or who came down and supported the exhibition.

Finally Kia Ora DC Kiwis has written a letter of thanks to both the NZ Maori Arts and Crafts Institute and the NZ Embassy for their efforts.

More photos are available on our Facebook page.
Royal Orbell and Alby McIlroy with Tuku Iho

The first coffee event

KODCK coffee in front of Museum

Coffee set up and KODCK community

KODCK community enjoy Tuku Iho

Tuku Iho Singers Rob Ruha and Ria Hall along with Eileen Fredrickson and Paula Winchester

Neil and Giovanna Di Sarno, Sherry Hall, Sarah and Inez Allen

Kiwis and friends waiting for Kapa Haka
Perspectives from Kia Ora DC Kiwis Community

KAPOTAHI TUAHINE FREDRICKSON
Tuku Iho has united our kiwi community in a much stronger way, seeing the living treasures gave us a sense of pride and love being shared for the world to see and experience. The kapa haka group bought these treasures to a spiritual level by song and dance and haka, and interacting with the public.

There is equality when the members invited folks to join them and the rewards were seeing the sheer joy and amazement of feeling like they belong. I'm so proud to be in this moment to unite, share, cry, laugh with all of you during this amazing time, the biggest gratitude and my love goes to Ihoa O Nga Mano for bringing us altogether and leaving with growth, compassion love and pride, mangai he tautoko aeanei ake nei ae

ALBY OATA MCILROY
There's no doubt about the impact that was created by Tuku Iho. And, I'm not just talking about the record number of visitors to the Smithsonian.

I was reminded of Chicago when the All Blacks played the 1st time and there were Kiwis everywhere. Although the event was different the support from our ex-pat community was unreal ... Tino wēhi!!

For me it certainly hit deep and it was pretty humbling and moving. On the final day during the ceremony for the gifting of the Waka to the Smithsonian, while the karakia was being said, (i haere ōku whakaaro ki nga wā o mua, ki ōku mātua, ki ōku tūpuna) my thoughts drifted back to my parents, my grandparents and my ancestors. Thoughts of what they must have endured and gone through. Seeing their culture dying. As a young Maori boy growing up I remember constantly hearing the words .... Maori will get you no where in this world!! Damn were they wrong!

RAYLENE GRANT
This visit was especially meaningful to Maddie, my 15 year old daughter. She had never been exposed to her culture in this extent before and this opened her eyes and her heart to her community. She now wants to learn Te Reo and have Katz design a Ta Moko for her (when she's old enough of course). For my 5 year old, he does the haka whenever he can and his making his own weapons. He tells everyone that he's 'half New Zealand' and I can tell that he feels strong and proud to be Maori which is everything to me.

This event brought our community together with such a strong bond, one that will never be broken. We met new friends and renewed our bonds to old friends. We had our eyes opened to the beauty and majesty of our culture through the eyes of those just seeing it for the first time. Tuku Iho will forever be in our hearts and our memories.

JANE PERRY DEHAIS
Tuku Iho was such a special event for myself and my family. Living abroad for the past 20+ years, any opportunity to expose myself and my family to the native NZ culture is embraced. In all my time away, no experience has left such a profound and life changing impression as this.

Raised in NZ as a bi-racial Maori woman during a time when Te Reo Maori was being integrated during my final year of high school, I experienced a cultural disconnect. Tuku Iho brought my culture, and my people to the world stage, sharing the immense beauty and richness of the ancestors and way of life, restoring a sense of mana that I had never claimed.

KATZ MAIHI (TUKE IHO)
Tena koutou for me it was seeing and feeling the aroha between you all and from you all even being so far from home it was a blessing to see the connection is still strong!! Kia ora DC !! He taonga Tuku iho

RAYLENE GRANT
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# Perspectives from Kia Ora DC Kiwis Community

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<tr>
<th><strong>LIZ TOGA</strong></th>
<th><strong>MIRIAM PATTERSON</strong></th>
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<td>What a wonderful way to bring the New Zealand community together. I felt like I was at home and it was really cool to listen to the music and see people embrace our culture. I also loved seeing my DC Kiwi family - it was in a way like taking my family to a village.</td>
<td>I was lucky enough to spend a lot of time with Tuku Iho on their visit to Washington DC. From the opening ceremony to the handing over of the canoe on closing day, it was an experience that will bring back beautiful memories.</td>
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<td>I felt unlimited gratitude and an overwhelming sense of love. Each day was filled with a sense of joy and community. I felt a tremendous amount of pride in our DC community and our Kapa Haka members. I loved the way people openly gave of themselves, their time and koha to make the Tuku Iho group feel welcomed.</td>
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<td>Sarah Allen</td>
<td>The response was truly beautiful, Katz Maihi responded from the heart by paying us as a community with the comment that even though they were thousands of miles from home, the welcome from the Kiwi community was like being at home.</td>
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<td>It reminded me of how a little country can spread such love worldwide and our little community can make you feel like part of an amazing family.</td>
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<td><strong>CAROLYN MALEKNASRI</strong></td>
<td><strong>THOMAS PARSONS</strong></td>
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<td>A little bit of home came to visit us and with that came new found friends and a greater appreciation of our beautiful culture!</td>
<td>Tuko Iho was amazing reminder to our deep roots, to our heritage. Being a Kiwi in a new adopted land, one could only identify and recognize with Tuku Iho. A wealth of pride and identity freely flowed. Bringing together others from around America. Being a kiwi is like being connected to all other kiwis here and abroad. It is family beyond family blood lines.</td>
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<td>Caring for others and sharing with other Kiwis.</td>
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<td><strong>TRACEY TAVAI</strong></td>
<td><strong>THOMAS PARSONS</strong></td>
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<td>I couldn't get enough of Tuku Iho! Each time I went back so many of our community was there, like it was our special gathering place; our temporary &quot;marae&quot;. An emotional time for me; but an empowering time for my girls. Hope this makes sense, hard to condense into a couple of sentences. Man, I loved Tuku Iho!</td>
<td>Arohanui.</td>
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Ta moko undertaken during Tuku Iho
Photos of community members and friends at Tuku Iho