

Notable Kiwis honoured in 'Hall of Fame'

by Alice Te Puni

A NEW children's book highlighting some of the nation's most famous Kiwis features Gisborne artists and leaders with East Coast connections.

Witi Ihimara and Matahi Brightwell from Gisborne are inspirational people found within the pages of **New Zealand Hall of Fame — 50 Remarkable Kiwis**.

Also there are Victoria Cross recipient Willie Apiata from Te Kaha and Keisha Castle Hughes, the star of the Whangara-based movie *Whale Rider* which Oscar nomination and launched her acting career.

The book by Maria Gill and illustrator Bruce Potter is a compilation of some of New Zealand's most iconic Kiwis, who children might recognise and relate to easily.

One of the aims of New Zealand Hall of Fame was to make children understand that becoming famous does not just happen overnight and without any effort.

Maria wanted to show how the determination and hard graft of these talented people helped

lift them to the top of their chosen field.

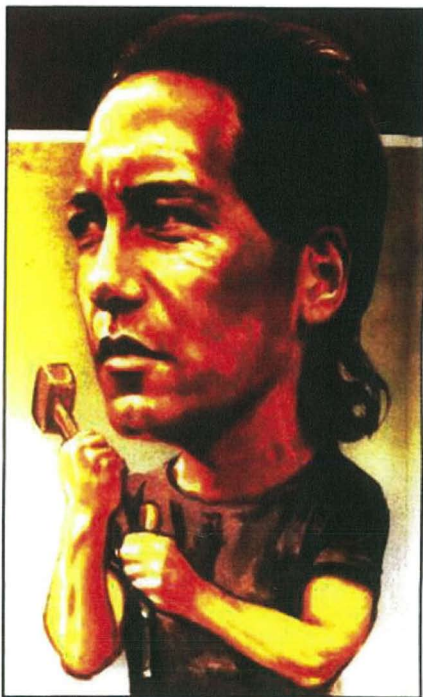
"I wanted the book to inspire children to achieve their dreams and goals," she said.

Each double-page spread shows what each person was like as a child, with photographs of their childhood and true stories of their early years, alongside direct quotes.

Maria creates a first-hand insight into the journey of each one of the 50 Kiwis selected for the book, while caricatures from illustrator Bruce Potter capture the essence of each person, as well as the photographic picture 'strips', trophy boards, informative box panels and timelines.

Scientists, pioneers, inventors, sportspeople, adventurers and other leaders who feature include Helen Clark, David Lange, Dame Whina Cooper, Kate Sheppard, Jean Batten, Sir Edmund Hillary, Sir Colin Meads and Sir Peter Jackson.

Maria writes children's non-fiction often with an environmental message. Bruce Potter is an international award-winning illustrator of over 95 books.



MASTER CARVER, SEAFARER: While other children played in the river, Matahi Brightwell would make canoes out of sticks or etch designs in the sand or mud. He helped build a double-hull waka *Hawaiki* 1, in Tahiti and sailed it to retrace the journey of early Maori settlers to New Zealand. He is now working on *Hawaiki* 2, an 11-year endeavour that, when finished, will be sailed from Tahiti to South America. Brightwell also revived the sport of *waka ama*, or outrigger canoeing.