

THE TONGAN CULTURAL GROUP

Mt Albert Grammar's Tongan group joined forces with the Auckland Girls' Grammar group to come first in all items and second overall in the Tongan section of the Auckland Secondary Schools Maori and Pacific Island Cultural Festival.

The M.A.G.S. Tongan warriors made it big for their size. It could have been the number of steps we had taken forward in order to achieve the goal, but also there were backward steps which we tried to have fewer of. It also helped that we had experience from previous festivals, and this year we were off to James Cook High School to participate in the festival.

As the group made the decision to combine with A.G.G.S., we started off with chaos. Boys were shy, girls were shy, keeping to each other's own group, giggling at any unusual thing the boys or girls did. It was hard at first to get one of our warriors to stand beside the girls during practice, pushing and shoving, avoiding standing or sitting next to them. But as we senior boys showed that there was nothing to it, after a while there was shoving and pushing as to who would be placed beside the girls. Hence this problem was solved.

In a flash of time it was soon time for the big festival. Everybody was getting more serious and at the same time very nervous. A small rehearsal and extra practice built up our confidence. By the last week we felt that we had a chance of taking away couple of prizes; we knew that we stood against a large number of other schools with a high standard in their performance.

We entered in the co-ed section of the Tongan competition in which these three items were compulsory: Lakalaka, Soke, and the Tauolunga. Before the big day we spent a whole day with the girls preparing our costumes and minor refinements to the actions and singing of the items. The main parts of the costumes arrived that afternoon from Tonga fresh from native trees. All expenses on costumes were paid with funds

from previous fund raising in church centres around Auckland.

The festival seemed to go by smoothly besides the panic. Everybody looked smart in their traditional costumes and proud to perform. For some it was their first time to do something of that kind, especially of their own culture. Things seemed so fast that in a while we had finished with everything behind us. It was then that we realised that besides all the competition and performances we had come to know and make friends with our sisters from A.G.G.S. and other schools.

Our tutor this year was Talau Fakatavea, a Tongan elder known throughout the Tongan community in Auckland and in Tonga for his service and devotion to Tongan cultural activities and especially to both schools. In the past years he has helped in our preparation and tutoring of the group for the festival.

This year he composed the "Lakalaka" especially for the festival. The lyrics were based on Tongan history, the new generation of Tongans in New Zealand, the two schools and a great emphasis on the importance of academic studies.

The "Soke" was also performed by both girls and boys. This is a stick dance which has come down from our ancestors and to this day it is not known what the lyrics mean.

Finally there was the "Tauolunga" a Tongan melody put to actions by graceful movements of the hands. This was performed by four girls, Gladys Tukofuka, Siueni Moala, Sela Langi and Kaiti Lokotui.

We dedicated the combined group's success in songs and actions to our beloved Queen, Her Majesty the late Queen Salote Tupou III, whom we will always remember in our hearts. She gave us pride in what we are, and laid a firm foundation for Tongans settled in New Zealand.

The Tongan group would like to thank the principals and staff of both schools for encouragement and moral support.

Special thanks are due to Mr Foster for being there when we needed him, and to Mr Wilson for giving

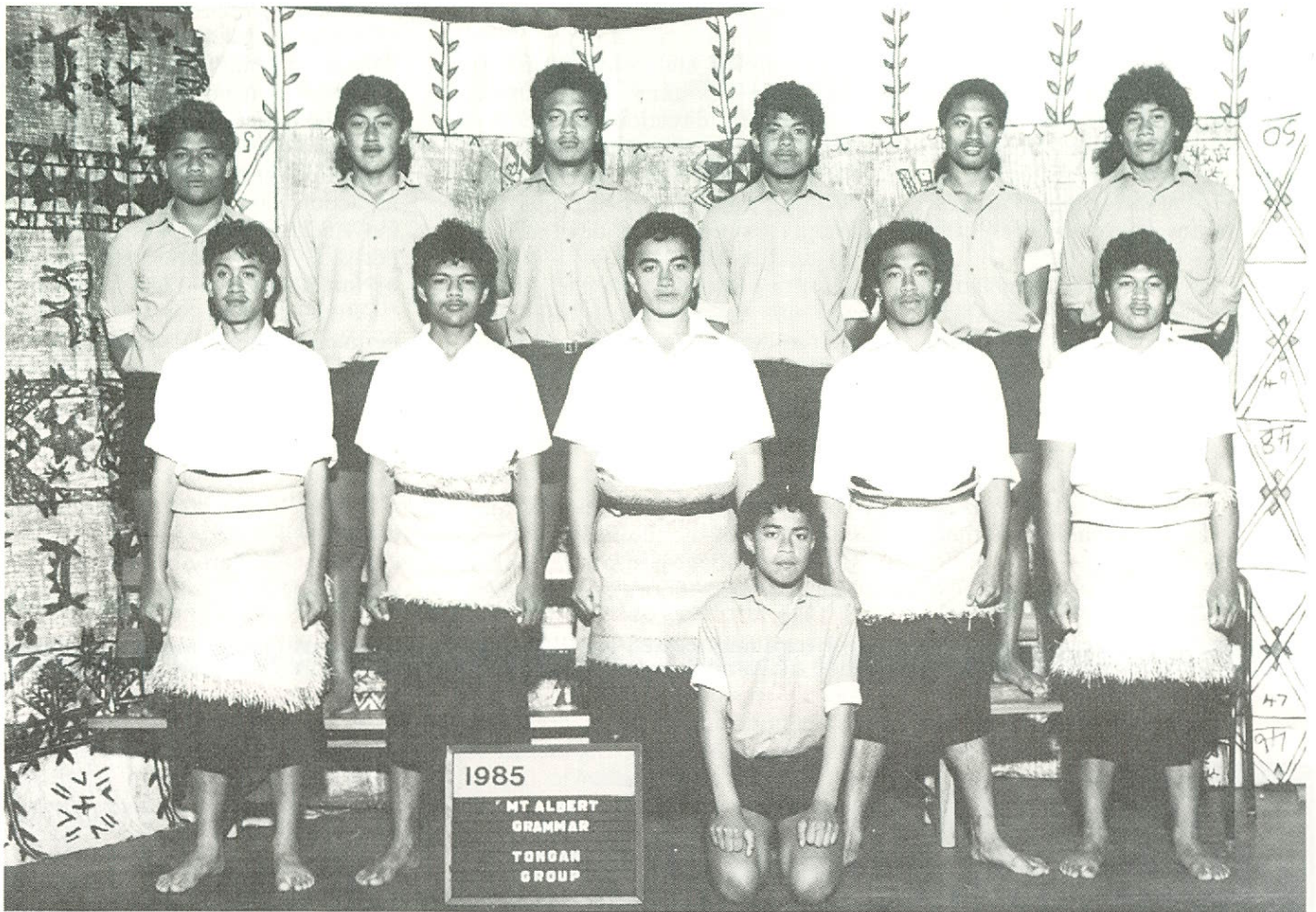
us time off school for meetings and last minute practices.

The group would like to wish everybody a pleasant year and good luck to fellow students in exams.

Tulou Atu

Teu hufanga he tala ha'ofaki kae atā ke fai ha ki'i lave fakamalo ke fakafongā'i atu ae fanau ako Tonga i he akoanga Mouna Alipate. Koe ta'u eni e fā ae fakataha ae kulupu Tonga Mouna Alipate, koe feinga kemau kau i hono fakafongā'i a Tonga mo hono hikihihi'i ae hinga o Tonga i he akoangani moe fonua mūlini, tautefito foki kemau ako ae ngaahi faiva fakatonga mo ma'u ae laumalie a hono taipau'i ae ngaahi anga moe loto oe fanau Tonga i Aotearoa.

Na'e fakataha ae kulupu he ta'uni moe akoanga fanau fefine Okalani i he feauhi faiva ae ngaahi otu motu Pasifiki moe kau Maori i he ta'uni, pea koe ola eni oe ngaahi ikuna ae kulupu 1985: 'uluaki he lakalaka, sōke, moe tauolunga tautautokofā pea i hono fakakatoa na'e ua ae kulupu. Koe ola fakafiefia eni pea koe ikuna koia oku fakahā i he ngaahi tokoni moe 'ofa ae ngaahi matu'a moe punake aia 'oku fakangalongata'a mo puke ma'u pe i homau loto ae fie foaki mo tataki kimautolu i he ngaahi hala moe anga fakatonga etau ngaahi fa'e moe tamai oe kuo hili, ke mau puke mo fai pehe foki ki he fanau ae kaha'u, tautefito foki i he fonuani. Oku oatu heni ae fakamālo lahi 'aupito kia Talau Fakatava aia na'e punake he ta'uni. Koe ta'u eni e ua ae punake a Talau he kulupu, 1983 mo ta'uni, pea 'oku 'ikai ke i ai ha lea e feunga moe anga emau fiefia ke fakamalo atu kia koe ho'o ngaahi tokoni, akonaki moe taimi kuo ke foaki ke ako'i kimautolu i he faiva fakatonga ki hono lelei taha. Pehe emau faka'amu ke tau toe ako faiva mo koe i he ngaahi ta'u oka hoko mai.



TONGAN GROUP

Back Row: Moses Lolohea, David Kolo'i, Tom Fotu, David Tongalahi,
Namaafe/Tanni, Lui Vakalahi.
Front Row: Martin Hola, Sam Santos, Paul Johansson, Sione Malu Kafoa,
Sione Pese
In Front: Anthony Tai

Pehe foki emau fakamalo lahi atu ki he ngaahi matu'a kotoa pe ae fanau ako a'e na'a nau kau ki hono poupu'u ae kulupu, pehe ki he kakai kotoa pe i Tonga mo Nu'u Sila ni ne nau poupu'u ae kulupu i he ngaahi teunga, pulotu moe tame'a, malō 'aupito ae 'ofa moe tokoni lahi. 'Oku oatu heni ae fakamalo makehe kia Luseane Kolo'i i he tokoni kotao pe kuo ne foaki i he me'a fakateunga

pea moe ū ngatu fakatonga a'e na'e lava kemau ngaue aki. Fakamalo ki he kaunga ako kotoa pe mei he ongo apiako, pea pehe foki ki he kau taki kotoa pe, malo e faiva. 'Oku pehe ae faka'amu ke hoko atu ma'u pe ae kulupu i he ta'u kotoa pe pehe foki moe feofo'ofani ae ongo apiako i he kaha'u.

Fakaosi aki ae fakamalo ko eni ae fakamalo lahi ki etau Tamai i hevani

i he ene tataki mo tokoni mai i he me'a kotoa pe i he tau fononga he maama faingata'a koeni. 'oku oatu heni ae talamonu mei he kulupu Tonga mouna Alipate kia kimoutolu kotoa pe, ofa ke ia kimoutolu ma'u pe ae ofa mafana ae Otua i he aho kotoa pe.

Tu'a ofa atu!

Paul Johansson