

## Meri Marshall

### Poem Notes

My lifelong interest in the written word has stemmed from supportive whānau and teacher role-models who had faith in my ability and creativity. Poetry is one of my favourite genres with most verse being written as waiata or song.

### *Poupou*

We always called my maternal grandfather Poupou from a very young age and it wasn't until recently that I realised the significance of our pet name for him and how he held up to his name as the support and provider for all the family. This poem gives some glimpses of our times together.

### Poet Notes

Ko tēnei te mihi mahana ki a koutou e pānui ana i ēnei rotarota.

Meri Marshall is of Ngāti Kahungunu descent with tribal affiliations to Te Ati Awa, Ngāti Toa and Ngai Tahu. She is a researcher and lecturer for Te Kura Māori, at Victoria University of Wellington, Faculty of Education. She has worked within English and Māori medium education since 1979. Meri lectures in primary, secondary and early childhood post-graduate courses and is currently completing her Master of Education degree. Her research interests include literacy for Māori children, indigenous research methodologies and Māori education. Meri's first music CD of original compositions entitled *Celebrate from your Heart* was released in 2000. She is currently writing and recording a second CD of songs and continues to build towards her first published collection of poems inspired by life, love, people and transformation from within.

Nō reira tēnā rā koutou katoa.

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## Poupou

Embedded memories stay with me  
recapturing our time  
together, as I watch you  
quiet and softly spoken  
my Poupou  
I see you with our whanaunga  
reliving the past  
the happy, the sad moments  
I see you laughing  
and I feel your heart

Climbing climbing climbing  
around the monument  
nobody minds  
cousins chasing, minds racing  
I'm at the top

I survey all I see  
Poupou mowing the pah lawns  
his steady pace and limping leg  
carrying him forward.  
keep going Poupou  
I don't want to stop playing yet

Come on Meri, let's go to the works  
get some bacon bones

clambering into your Morris Minor  
we chew in synch  
on chocolate fish and dairy milk  
Can't this thing go any faster Poupou,  
put your foot down!

You in preparation  
not sure what I'm seeing  
a crazy headless chicken  
no fuss, no bother  
kai on the table

A man of few words  
a big man with a big heart  
always time for your mokopuna  
always the provider  
always the protector  
my Poupou.