



Kia Orana

Welcome to Punarei!

In July, here at Punarei we have been tediously collating, researching and fine tuning some very important artefacts that are currently with the Royal Albert British Museum in London.

When I visited there last August, I was honoured and privileged to view some of the artefacts that are not on display but for private viewing only. One in particular that caught my attention was the Feather God (pictured below), it is important to note that the rod does not take human form; it has feathers at one end and it has spear tipped pattern burned onto it, (not painted) running down its spine. This Feather God was believed to be stolen by the missionaries in 1821 from the people of Aitutaki.



Last week, here in the Cook Islands; we celebrated Ui Ariki Day (the Day of our chiefs) to honour the traditional leaders from each village in Rarotonga. As the leaders paraded in their traditional dress wear, I noticed that the Feather God's are missing today compared to the historic sketches of early European depiction where they were present when the chiefs welcomed visitors onto their island.



On the same trip, I met anthropologist and ethnologist, Dr Michaela Appel, Museum Fünf Kontinente who has supported me in researching Aitutakian patterns and artefacts. At the museum I was able to view this very important tiki figure from Vaikuriri (pictured below).



Vaikuriri belongs to the Marae of Tamatoa; it was the last place to be destroyed on the order of Tamatoa soon after his daughter fell ill and passed away.

Today, the tiki figure from Vaikuriri remains at the Museum Fünf Kontinente as our current tiaki (guardians). I hope to one day return this taonga (treasures) back to Aitutaki however, mentioned previously in our first newsletter, however, we do not have the facilities to house these precious taonga.

Don't forget to check us out on [Facebook](#).

Ngaa Kitai Taria Pureariki

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