



# Koro Sam

## CPL Samuel Tutaua Tarawhiti

Regiment Number: 67389

World War II

28 Māori Battalion

'D' Company

This is a tribute to my Grand Uncle commonly known to the family as Uncle Sam or to the younger generation as 'Koro Sam'.

I have very fond and clear memories about this amazing Kaumatua.

His name was Samuel Tutaua Tarawhiti, son of Nuku Tipene Tarawhiti and Tukotahi (Te Kawengaroa) Rangiwhehu. He was the youngest of 13 children.

His tribal connections were Waikato and Taranaki - Ngati Whawhakia and Nga Ruahinerangi.

As a young boy, Sam attended Auroa School. After returning home from the war, his name was inscribed on the Auroa Roll of Honour, for those soldiers that served during World War II from his community. It was inscribed as Sammy Nuku.

I remember a story that I was told as a young person about Koro Sam being very sick, so sick that a bed was made for him in the lounge at his homestead. His parents then sent for a tohunga that came from Parihaka. In accordance to Maori custom, when this Tohunga came to the house and saw how unwell Koro Sam was, the Tohunga walked directly to Koro Sam and bit him on the forehead. The next day Koro Sam was up and walking around in good health despite being on death's door the night previous. I was told this story from my father and also from Koro Sam himself.

I recall another story that was told to me. Koro Sam's mother had told him, just as he was preparing to leave overseas to serve, that if he did not marry then she would leave her land shares and interests to him. This was a promise that Koro Sam kept until he died – he never married before or after the war.

I remember this Kaumatua staying with us in Tauranga that Koro Sam would frequently go to the RSA on a daily basis. Koro Sam wore his 28th Maori Battalion dress jacket and wore rockn roll dark glasses like those that was worn by Bill Hayley and the Comets.

Koro Sam loved to play the piano in the pub or at the RSA. He was a great cook, and make the best biscuits and cakes, all of which he learnt whilst in the Army.

I recall him also saying one day the best cure for a "hang over" was to have a big feed.

Memorial submitted by:  
Hone Nuku Tarawhiti