

# Marlene J. Bennetts MNZM

Award-winning author, Te Ātiawa o Te Waka-a-Māui

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Bennetts, Marlene (1938 –) is a poet and writer of fiction for adults and children. Her poetry has appeared in New Zealand and overseas in anthologies including Katherine Mansfield Centennial Issue (1998), Poetry Kanto (1989), Poets for Africa (1986), and The President’s Awards for Literary Excellence (1995). Her awards for poetry include the Delores Boccanera Poetry Prize, awarded by the British literary magazine Dandelion, which writes of her work: ‘Marlene Bennetts’ command of words reminds us of the Greek classics...’.

A collection of poetry *Beyond the Coast* (2001) completes the trilogy that began in 1990 with *Return to the Coast* and *Coastal Cornerstones*. Of Te Ātiawa o Te Waka-a-Māui descent, Bennetts had eleven children’s books translated into te reo Māori by the University of Waikato between 1992 and 1998. Titles translated

include ‘The Feathered Cloak’, ‘The Magic Greenstone’ and ‘Who’s Afraid of the Taniwha?’ Other titles for children include ‘Hector to the Rescue’ (1996), and two novels for young adults, ‘Wing High Gooftah’ (1995), and ‘The Aroha Pendant’ (1999).

Bennetts is a popular participant in the Writers in Schools programme, with one school commenting: ‘We felt as if Marlene had always been part of our school. Her warmth, good humour and interest in our students made for an enjoyable and interesting day.’ At the Queen’s Birthday Honours 2003, Bennetts was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (M.N.Z.M) in recognition of her services to literature.

‘The Impossible Swim’ was published by Emjay Publishing in 2003 and ‘Skalaska’s New Home’ was published by Emjay Publishing in 2005. Bennetts has also published a collection of poems for children, ‘Caboodle’, with Deborah Macowan (Emjay Publishing, 2005). ‘Waikaka: A New Home’ was published by Emjay Publishing in 2006. Bennetts also wrote ‘No Ordinary Flower Girl’ which was illustrated by Trish Bowles (Reed, 2006). In 2016, both ‘The Forgotten Dambuster’ and ‘The Little Drummer Boy’ (illustrated by Trish Bowles), were published by Emjay Publishing.

Bennetts latest release ‘Whakaetanga/Acceptance’ tells her story of overcoming adversity to become an accomplished writer. She aims to encourage others facing challenges to overcome, and will donate 95% of the proceeds to support disabled Māori through Whānau Ora initiative Hei Whakapiki Mauri.

# Whakaaetanga Acceptance

Marlene J. Bennetts

Emjay Publishing June, 2022  
2/B Lascelles St. Martins, Christchurch 8022,  
Paperback 206 pages,  
Price: \$40 (incl g.s.t.)

“Award-winning author Marlene J. Bennetts (Te Ati Awa) autobiography begins with a vivid picture of backblocks childhood in 1940s and 50s. Marlene had a semi-nomadic life because her father worked in sawmills. Born in 1938 Marlene attended fifteen different schools. Marlene’s account of her adult life is equally entertaining when she and her husband abandoned their plans in 1987 to retire in Auckland and decided, on impulse, to buy an old cottage in Blackball, West Coast South Island. Where she began writing full-time. In 2003 Marlene was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her services to literature.

95% of the proceeds of this book go to support disabled Māori through Whānau Ora initiative Hei Whakapiki Mauri.” – *Trevor Agnew, 22 July 2022*



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