

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

Wai 2700

Wai 1940

IN THE MATTER OF the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry

BY a claim by Jane Mihingarangi Ruka
Te Korako, on behalf of the
Grandmother Council of the Waitaha
Nation, including the three hapu of
Ngāti Kurawaka, Ngāti Rakaiwaka
and Ngāti Pakauwaka

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF SHARON (IRI) ROSE BARBER

15 August 2022

RECEIVED
Waitangi Tribunal
16 Aug 22
Ministry of Justice WELLINGTON

Phoenix Law Ltd

Barristers and Solicitors

200 Willis Street

PO Box 27400

Wellington 6141

Phone: (04) 384 1304

Email: mason@phoenixlaw.expert

Counsel Acting: Janet Mason

I, **Sharon (Iri) Rose Barber**, Kuia, of Poutini Ngai Tahu, state that:

Introduction

1. I present this Brief of Evidence (“BoE”) in support of the claim filed by Jane Ruka, on behalf of the Waitaha Grandmother Council.
2. Ko Tuhuru te Tangata, ko Papakura te Wāhine, ko Arahura te Awa, ko Mawhera te Whenua, ko Poutini te Taniwha, ko Pounamu te taonga tuku iho.

Rangatira Wāhine

3. I wish to tell the stories of my rangatira wāhine ancestors.
4. In about 1810, my tupunua, Tuhuru and his wife, Papakura, helped lead an ope/war party leaving Kaiapoi for Te Tai o Poutini, the West Coast. In brief, the final battle against Ngati Tumatakokiri took place near Runanga just north of Mawhera (Greymouth). In accordance with custom, Papakura threw her cloak over the small remnants of Ngati Tumatakokiri people, who were cowering on the battlefield. This saved the Tumatakokiri whakapapa. It also illustrates the fact that in my whanau and hapu, the women, fought shoulder to shoulder with our men folk.
5. I want in particular to acknowledge Moroiti, who was the sister of Tuhuru, and a tohunga in her own right.
6. About five years ago, the dream of our kaumatua and hapu carvers and weavers to build a marae with wharenuī named Tuhuru, and whareakai named Papakura was given life. That Marae goes to illustrate the fact of equality between our men and our women. I would also suggest that several submissions included in the Ngai Tahu claim support the fact of mana wāhine, which preceded white Settlement on the West Coast.
7. My tupuna fought stridently to defend the Coast and our precious taonga pounamu. For example, there was an armed Ngati Rarua ope who came our way in the 1830s. Traditionally, an ope was an 80-strong fighting band, and

this particular enemy had muskets, whereas we, Ngati Waewae o Poutini Ngai Tahu, did not.

8. Upon reaching Mawhera, another enemy leader called out to Te Niho at the path known as E Rua Moana in Greymouth. Te Niho refused to let the war party in, instead protecting our people.
9. That war party travelled south and murdered some of the Ngai Tahu people living in the Wakatipu area. They then continued to travel South over the natural land bridge over the Kawerau River, that is near Queenstown.
10. Another story handed down by my whanau concerns Nihorere, the sole surviving daughter of Tuhuru and Papakura. While camped at the confluence of the Hokitika and Kokatahi Rivers, in the duck harvesting season, all the men of the village, including Tuhuru, were busy. Ducks were sitting ducks in the moulting season.
11. The women, children and old folks were busy working greenstone at their encampments. A war party arrived with guns approaching from the North. Seeing their impending doom, Nihorere, a teenager at the time, stealthily left the encampment and she ran all the way to Lake Kaniere, where she warned her father Tuhuru, and her brothers of the imminent attack.
12. Later, Tuhuru and Te Niho agreed to a truce, meeting in the middle of the river where they hongied. At their feet they found in the water an enormous pounamu boulder, which they called “Feast for the Eyes”, “Kai Kanohi”. There was an old story that Tuhuru’s sister, Moroitī, carved a mere pounamu from this stone, Kai Kanohi, and secured Tuhuru’s release from his five-year incarceration on D’Urville Island/Rangitoto ki Tonga.
13. Tuhuru was taken there because he had a reputation as being the most skilled arm to arm combat fighter in the whole of the South Island. He was six feet eight inches tall. Te Niho was one of the fighting generals under Te Rauparaha, and to cut a long story short, Te Niho delivered Tuhuru to D’Urville Island for a private audience with Te Rauparaha at Te Rauparaha’s request.

14. Te Rauparaha asked if Tuhuru and our people would share the art of working pounamu, so that is what they did. I found out only recently there is actually a pounamu outcrop on D'Urville Island, and that is why they went there. There was stone around to be used.
15. Moroiti delivered the mere pounamu to Te Rauparaha on the understanding that Tuhuru and the other chiefly members of the whanau and hapu would be able to return to their homes, so that is what happened.
16. I wish to recommend that the Waitangi Tribunal introduce into further evidence about pre-European Māori society, Raymond Firth's book. The book is entitled *Economics of the New Zealand Māori*. It is a comprehensive study of traditional Māori society. While actually written as an MA thesis at Auckland University, the author went on to have a successful career as the head of the London School of Economics.
17. The Youtube footage of Arahura Marae opening 5 years ago brings into life the equal roles of men and women historically and in our case, contemporarily. Our women led the opening ceremony in full regalia, laying down the challenge. This caused some controversy as other North Island iwi disagreed with our practices – he taonga tuku iho. In schools, children are taught that the only role women have is the karanga. This is not true. Our ancestors have been in the South Island for 1,000 years. As a proud Poutini Ngai Tahu woman, I stand firm on remembering the words of our tupuna in terms of how we conduct ourselves.
18. I can also tell you this amazing story about this most amazing woman. I think her name was Hinetaumai. When the first Pakeha ethnographers came down the East Coast exploring, they came to a little settlement, and everybody was sitting around an open fire outside. Hinetaumai had half of her face completely tattooed like a man.
19. A Pakeha guy said, if you sat beside this chief, because she was a chief, and that was the significance of the fact that she was having her whole ta moko on the whole half of her face. If you sat next to her on one side, you would think you were sitting next to a ferocious warrior, but on the other side where her face was unmarked, you were just in the presence of a beautiful woman.

20. If you have a chance to look at the powhiri that our woman did, you will see just how feisty and fabulous our women were and are.
21. In my whanau, we have a mantra “we sight from the coast”. Te iti aha koa, te iti pounamu.

Dated: 15 August 2022

SHARON (IRI) ROSE BARBER