

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL  
I TE ROOPU WHAKAMANA I TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

WAI 2700  
WAI 2709

IN THE MATTER OF the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry (Wai 2700)

AND

IN THE MATTER OF a claim by Rosaria Hotere for and on behalf of herself,  
her whanau and Te uri o Hau (Wai 2709)

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**BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF ROSARIA HOTERE**

**Dated this 10<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026**

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**RECEIVED**

Waitangi Tribunal

**10 Apr 26**

Ministry of Justice  
WELLINGTON



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**MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL****Introduction**

1. My name is Rosaria Hotere. I provide this brief of evidence in support of our whanau Wai 2709 Mana Wāhine claim.
2. This evidence addresses the lived realities of systemic discrimination against Māori women in the mid-20th century and the work undertaken by my sister, Jane Hotere, over the course of her life to restore mana wāhine within our whānau, hapū, iwi, and public institutions.
3. I speak from personal knowledge, whānau kōrero, and shared lived experience.
4. This brief demonstrates:
  - a. The structural racism faced by Māori women in education, public facilities, and professional training;
  - b. The intergenerational transmission of rangatiratanga through wāhine lines;
  - c. Jane's contribution to Treaty justice, civil rights advocacy, and mana whenua representation; and
  - d. The Crown's ongoing failure to adequately recognise and resource Māori women's leadership.

**Whakapapa and generational mana wāhine**

5. My sister, Jane Hotere, was born on 29 May 1948 at Kawakawa Hospital in Te Tai Tokerau. She was born into a lineage of wāhine rangatira.
6. Our mother, Sarah Maioha Hotere, and her sisters were trained nurses:
  - a. Mrs Makere Tana; and
  - b. Mrs Emere Cherrington.

7. Despite their qualifications and capability, Māori women at that time were barred from training in Auckland. Institutional racism prevented Māori women from entering professional pathways on equal footing with Pākehā women.
8. This was not incidental discrimination. It was systemic and sanctioned by Crown policy and practice. Jane was therefore born into a world in which Māori women were professionally qualified yet structurally excluded.
9. Our whakapapa traces to:
  - a. Makere Rii Maumau, who held a female chiefly title;
  - b. Sarah Maioha, one of the first in the north to have a telephone and a horse-drawn buggy; and
  - c. Hoani Maioha of Ngāti Mahuta, brought north as part of a peace arrangement between Waikato and Ngāpuhi.
10. These lines show that mana wāhine and peacemaking authority were integral to our whakapapa. However, Crown structures did not recognise that authority.
11. Jane was appointed an Honorary Community Officer by the Minister of Māori Affairs in 1985. It was a formal but non-salaried role under the Department of Māori Affairs.
12. In practical terms, it meant Jane was recognised as a trusted local leader and given limited official authority to support her community. The role typically included:
  - a. Acting as a liaison between Māori communities and the Department of Māori Affairs;
  - b. Providing guidance and support to whānau on social, welfare, and housing matters;
  - c. Advocating for community needs to government agencies;
  - d. Helping administer or facilitate programmes (e.g. housing, land issues, community development); and

- e. Exercising limited statutory powers in some cases (for example, assisting with compliance or reporting issues affecting Māori affairs).
13. “Honorary” meant she wasn’t a full-time government employee and was usually unpaid (or only received allowances), but the appointment still carried official recognition and mana. It signalled that the Crown saw her as someone with standing, influence, and responsibility within her community.
14. In short, it was a hybrid role. It was part community advocate, part government representative. It was grounded in trust, leadership, and service.

### **Racial segregation and humiliation**

15. In 1948, racist practices were operating openly in Kaikohe. Māori men and women were not permitted to use public toilets in Kaikohe shops. This was not an isolated act of prejudice. It reflects a wider pattern of segregation and humiliation imposed upon Māori communities during that period. Māori women in particular experienced the intersection of racism and sexism.
16. The denial of access to public facilities was a denial of dignity. The barring of Māori women from professional training in Auckland was a denial of opportunity and economic security. Jane grew up hearing and witnessing these injustices. Those experiences shaped her lifelong commitment to civil rights and Māori representation.

### **Migration to Auckland and navigating two worlds**

17. Our family relocated to Auckland with the assistance of Dame Whina Cooper, who directed a Māori Affairs worker to secure accommodation for our whānau. Dame Whina recognised that our mother understood both te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā, and could navigate Crown systems. This move reflected a broader pattern of Māori urban migration facilitated, yet inadequately supported, by the Crown.
18. Urbanisation often resulted in:

- a. Disconnection from whenua;
- b. Overcrowded or inadequate housing; and
- c. Limited access to culturally appropriate services.

19. Māori women frequently bore the burden of maintaining whānau cohesion in these circumstances. Jane witnessed our mother and aunties navigate state systems while retaining tikanga and mana. This model of wāhine leadership profoundly influenced her.

#### **Ongoing Treaty and legal advocacy**

20. Jane worked for approximately 30 years as a historical researcher supporting Ngāpuhi and Waikato-Tainui Treaty claims.

21. Her work involved:

- a. Gathering oral histories;
- b. Researching land confiscations and Crown breaches;
- c. Preparing historical material for Tribunal proceedings;
- d. Assisting kaumātua to articulate claims.

22. Tangata whenua historical research in the Treaty space is labour-intensive, emotionally demanding, and unpaid. Much of this work is undertaken by Māori women. Yet Māori women researchers are rarely publicly acknowledged.

23. Jane's contribution directly supported iwi claims seeking recognition of Crown breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Her work strengthened collective memory and restored suppressed narratives. This is mana wāhine in action. She was reclaiming history and asserting rangatiratanga.

24. Later in life, she became a Waitangi Tribunal claimant (e.g. Wai 974, Wai 2582) and was instrumental in filing an application under the Marine and Coastal Area Act.

**Political involvement (Manamotuhake)**

25. Jane was involved with Matiu Rata's political party Manamotuhake and stood for election in Mt Albert. She provided advocacy at a national political level and engagement in Māori self-determination movements of the 1980s

**Māori health sector work**

26. Jane was involved in He Puna Ora Māori Health, a trust linked to the National Council of Māori Nurses. She worked in Māori health development with a focus on community wellbeing and service delivery.

**Māori Women's Welfare League**

27. Jane was a lifelong member of the Māori Women's Welfare League in Sandringham. This is important because the League was central to:

- a. whānau welfare;
- b. housing advocacy;
- c. health initiatives; and
- d. Māori women's leadership.

**Civil Rights advocacy**

28. Jane was involved in civil rights matters that reached the High Court. These efforts addressed systemic inequalities affecting Māori communities in urban Auckland. Māori women often led grassroots advocacy, particularly where state agencies failed to consult appropriately. Jane did not seek recognition. She sought justice.

29. Her work represents unpaid civic labour that sustained Māori political participation. The Crown has historically relied on this unpaid labour without proper structural support.

30. Mana wāhine is not symbolic. It is practical, political, and intergenerational. Jane embodied mana wāhine through:

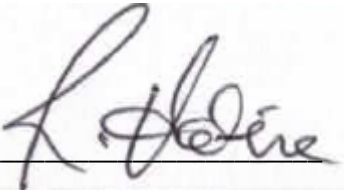
- a. Upholding whakapapa;
  - b. Restoring suppressed histories;
  - c. Supporting kaumātua leadership;
  - d. Challenging racist systems;
  - e. Advocating for environmental justice.
31. Her work must be understood as part of a lineage of wāhine rangatira resisting colonial marginalisation.
32. The work undertaken by Jane strengthened iwi capacity to pursue Treaty justice. It also strengthened younger generations' understanding of whakapapa and rights under Te Tiriti.
33. However, the emotional and economic costs were borne by Māori women and their whānau. The Crown has not adequately recognised or remedied those burdens.

### **Conclusion**

34. My sister Jane Hotere dedicated her life to advancing the rights, dignity, and representation of Māori, particularly Māori women.
35. Her life story illustrates the lived impacts of Crown discrimination and the resilience of mana wāhine.
36. Her work in Treaty research, civil rights advocacy, and civic representation demonstrates the leadership Māori women have consistently provided despite structural exclusion.
37. I provide this evidence so that the Tribunal may recognise:
- a. The systemic discrimination faced by Māori women in mid-20th century Aotearoa;
  - b. The unpaid and under-recognised labour of Māori women in Treaty justice processes;
  - c. The need for structural remedies that centre mana wāhine.

38. Jane's legacy is one of courage, service, and unwavering commitment to our people.

**DATED** this 10<sup>th</sup> day of April 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rosaria Hotere", written over a horizontal line.

**Rosaria Hotere**