

MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL

- [1] In Nolan's korero he said he ran into my father, Mars Pohatu, when he arrived at Faenza. Nolan said that Dad was hoha because he knew that Nolan and the rest of the boys from Muriwai were underage. Dad had a cheek: he was underage too. If anything he was younger than Nolan. He died in 1995. Dad's full name was Mataiata Mars Bartlett Pohatu. But he was known by everyone as Mars.
- [2] Dad's mother was a Bartlett and his father was Te Huauri Pohatu. Dad married a Wylie, Rata Saunders Wylie.
- [3] I was born 9 months after Dad got back on 9th December 1946. My siblings were born before Dad went to war and my brother Soloman was at the train station when he and Nolan and the others jumped off the train at Muriwai.
- [4] ANZAC day is the most poignant memory for me. When I was a kid ANZAC day just meant going to the marae, putting your penny in the plate and then having a big kai. That was all. It wasn't until much later in life that I realised what it all meant. It hit me when I went to High School that's when I realised how many we had lost. At high school we learned about English wars and English songs, but we didn't learn about our Papas and our Uncles who fought in the war that concerned us the most.
- [5] On ANZAC day they marched from the cattle stop to the marae and the women would karanga, one after another and it was all very moving. When they marched I saw the look on Dad's face, there was such sadness written all over it. You could see the memories etched on all their faces. You could tell he was deep in thought remembering them all. He was always very quiet on ANZAC day.

- [6] On ANZAC day my mother and all my nannies would all make beautiful flowers and Mum would make one for her brother, Uncle Joe who didn't come back from the war. My sister Joseph is named after him. My elder sister is named Cairo Te Aroha after the place where our Uncle was killed. Our brother is named Joseph Nivea – which is another place where an Uncle was killed. They are all war names. ANZAC was important for my grandmother because it was about remembering what her husband went through, even though he came back. ANZAC day is becoming more and more important every year because we need to keep those memories alive. We have to keep acknowledging what those people did for us.
- [7] Granddad served in World War 1. Dad never spoke about nor ever mentioned anything about the war when we were around. Never.
- [8] When I look at Nolan I see a war hero. He's all we have left. He went to fight the war for us and he was just a young boy. We're so lucky that we still have him with us. Nolan is a living link to a generation nearly all gone. He's a precious and humble man.
- [9] The Waitangi Tribunal coming to Muriwai means so much for us the people of Muriwai. For us it is the recognition of the sacrifices that our people made and we appreciate so much the Tribunal coming to listen to us. My Uncle died and I never knew him.
- [10] My Dad was always sick when he came back from the war. It never came right and he suffered for years. He was always coughing and he had a tin next to his bed that he would spit into. I think the war took a toll on him. He didn't get any help for that, not once.

[11] Dad worked on a farm for a Pakeha, Bill Tuttenburg and the Blacks. Dad didn't get a farm under the Rehabilitation scheme. He then turned to carpentry and built buildings in Gisborne.

[12] Dad believed in education and was educated himself. He could type and learned a form of shorthand while he was in the army. He wanted us to all have an education and wanted us his kids to be as good if not better than the Pakeha next to us and he believed we were capable of achieving anything. What made Dad proud? All his sons did really well at school, they all got university entrance.

[13] What was Dad's legacy and that of the Maori Battalion? It's the freedoms that we enjoy today. They paid the price for that. Freedom in our own country.

Chiquita Pohatu