

**IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL     WAI 2500**  
**WAI 1344**

**IN THE MATTER OF**                                     The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

**IN THE MATTER OF**                                     The Military Veterans Kaupapa  
Inquiry

AND

**IN THE MATTER OF**                                     A claim by Turi Stone, Tamati  
Pohatu, Most Reverend  
Archbishop Brown Turei and  
Nolan Raihania.

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**BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF**

**TEMPLE ISAACS**

**DATED 14 AUGUST 2015**

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**Te Mata a Maui Law**

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## **MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL**

- [1] My nieces and nephews have asked me to talk about their father, my brother, Dave Ngarangione who served in World War II and I am happy to do so. I am 81 and a pakeke and kaumatua of Muriwai and Ngai Tamanuhiri. I grew up in Muriwai with my close cousin Dave Pohatu so I will also talk about what life was like here at Muriwai when the war was on.
- [2] My brother Dave decided to be different to many other Maori and enlisted in the air force. His job was to help repair the airplanes. He helped the mechanics and engineers. He got some stigma for not joining the Maori Battalion. But it was his choice. He wanted to be different. Mum and Dad didn't want him to go, but he went.
- [3] When the Maori Battalion came back there were heaps of people at the welcome back party and it was wonderful. But Dave didn't come back with them. He came back separately with two others but they still had their welcome back party. It was just smaller. When Dave came back I was 12 or 13. I was glad to see him but it was still sad.
- [4] He had a family, my nieces and nephews but he still had to go. They were younger than me and we use to play together. He was genuinely relieved to get back. When he got back he had TB and had to spend time in hospital.
- [5] He hardly spoke about the war with us, only with other veterans. My brother, he had this tin of gold teeth. He brought it back from the war. I often wondered what on

earth he got up to, to have a tin full of gold teeth. His wife hated it, it gave her the spooks. My father found out about it and took the tin to the urupa and buried those teeth. I don't know what my brother was thinking. To this day I'm still not sure if they were souvenirs or part of his retirement plan.

- [6] Whairiri Te Hau was one of the cooks for the van and his sister married Dave. Dave named their son Te Rau Aroha after the name of the kai van. Te Rau is still alive today and lives in Muriwai.

### **Life at Muriwai during the war years**

- [7] When we were at school we were taught drills on how to survive an air raid. We had dug trenches heading towards Muriwai and if the bell rung he had to run and jump into these trenches. Looking back we must have been crazy to think that someone would invade Muriwai!

- [8] The kids had jobs knitting for the soldiers. We knitted hats, scarves and balaclavas. We helped prepare kai for the soldiers too. The food was mostly mutton, pork and paua stored in kunikuni fat in kerosene tins. Beautiful kai!

- [9] When they came back it was a tough life and not getting farms put them back even further. There was poverty at Muriwai but we didn't starve. We had the moana and we had our gardens. Always big gardens. The soldiers listened to the kaumatua that were alive in Muriwai when they came back and those kaumatua helped those soldiers to settle back. That said, I don't think those soldiers got a fair go from the government when they came back.

- [10] Muriwai had a home guard. Lord help us if they were our last line of defence. They were all locals and were all kaumatuas! They used to do parades at Muriwai and would train down by the beach. When they marched they would all talk in te reo. They would put targets up against Young Nick's Head and you could see the targets and all the white puffs of dust from the bullets hitting against the cliff. The army supplied the guns and the ammunition.
- [11] Muriwai was like a ghost town when the men were gone. You definitely knew they were gone and you missed them while they were gone. When they came back there was no health care facilities here at Muriwai for them.
- [12] Muriwai has always had big ANZAC celebrations. Muriwai has a long tradition of holding ANZAC day celebrations and has kept it for all these years. There were always long lines of people marching. Dave went on those marches. Today his son Wi wears his father's medals and he is the kaitiaki. The children carry the wreaths after the service to the urupa and spread them over all the veterans.
- [13] At our ANZAC celebrations we celebrate with local Pakeha as well. We have a long tradition of that. We have always shown them respect and we continue to do so to this day. They come here and bring their families here too. The names of their fathers, their tipuna are on our honour boards as well in the whare kai. The Pakeha got the farms and we didn't but we still treat them with respect because that is the proper tikanga.

[14] An American millionaire brought the land at Young Nicks Head. When he came here he asked if he could have a powhiri so we had one for him. During the powhiri he saw the photo of my brother and said that he had an excellent relationship with the Maori working in the air force. He told his son that if it wasn't for the Maori soldiers he wouldn't be alive today. He told his son that he was never to do anything bad against the Maori people as he had nothing but the utmost respect for the Maori people. If people ask me what the legacy of the Maori soldier is today I would say it is the respect and admiration that they earned while they were overseas. They upheld the mana of the people and people overseas and here, have not forgotten.

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Temple Isaacs

Muriwai