

IN THE MATTER OF The Treaty of
Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF Claims by
HUHURERE
TUKUKINO and
OTHERS known
as the HAURAKI
CLAIMS

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF CARRIE ANNE ALBRECHT ON
BEHALF OF THE CLAIMANTS**

1. My name is Carrie Anne Albrecht and I reside at Thames. I am of 'Ngati Hauauru' hapu of 'Ngati Maru', which is my principal iwi. I am a great grand-daughter of 'Meremana Konui' whom our whanau now derive our name from, and who in his time was the tohunga for our hapu.
2. Being Ngati Maru means I also whakapapa to the other iwi and related iwi of 'Marutuahu'.

My whakapapa from Marutuahu is as follows:

Marutuahu = Hineurunga

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Te Ngako

|

Kahurautao

|

Rautao

|

Hape

|

Hauauru

|

Te Konui

|

Te Riroi

|

Meremana Konui

|

Waimanuka Meremana

|

Lena Meremana

|

Myself

3. My evidence today will be in two parts. The first part will focus on my observation and experiences in life as I grew up in Hauraki. The second part will focus on health regarding our people.

4. I was born in Thames at the old Braemar Hospital, and spent my early years in Waitakaruru. During my teenage years my mother and myself returned to Thames to live.
5. My mother's family were kaitiaki for Te More a Tuna.
6. I remember my grandad's house, in particular I remember it had a flat earthen floor. My mother was very conscious of that floor and would comment on its natural fibre and substance as opposed to that of a wooden floor. We were in the habit of comparing Maori and Pakeha things.
7. At times it was difficult for us with our multi cultural backgrounds. It seemed to me that my mother sent me off to Queen Victoria School to learn to be a Maori.
8. In my adult life I think we were quite lucky compared to that of my parents. We had a little bit more money and amenities and did not rely as much on the land as they did.
9. In my mother's time what little money they had was spent on the most basic and versatile of foods, like flour. Also in her time they cultivated or collected most of their food stocks. There was always work to be done in the gardens, hinaki and nets to be checked, and seafood gathering trips to be undertaken. In my mother's time they were very frugal, no food was wasted at all.
10. When fish and shellfish were plentiful they were preserved by drying for the harder times ahead, and likewise with forest and seabirds preserved by storing them in their own fat. The food was shared amongst the whanau.

11. All the whanau had specific food gathering places and knew where these places were. My uncles always said they knew every fruit tree in the district, whether on Maori or Pakeha land. Knowing my uncles I have no doubt that those fruit trees knew them well too.
12. All these things were added to the table to keep the whanau going as a matter of survival. In my grandparent's time the access to food was never critical. They always said the gathering of food was just a way of life and there was always something good to eat.
13. In regards to health, the general problems that affected my parent's generation also affected us. Most of us caught 'hakehake', we were covered in spots, and/or 'raupa', where our feet got cracks that never seemed to heal. My mother and uncles always knew of remedies and cures to deal with these things though.
14. My mother told me that my grandfather used to wrap the babies as they died in a blanket and row across in his canoe to the urupa to bury his baby.
15. However, even though we had health problems I do not believe my generation suffered as much as that of my parents and grandparents. Many of their generation died as they faced the brunt of the epidemics.
16. Eventually I had to leave Thames to find employment however I always knew where I was from. After I married I returned home with my children. I knew we would manage because our relationship with whanau and friends still living in Thames. We could always rely on their support. I had been away for a while and learned and practiced many non-Maori ways, never the less, I was still accepted immediately by my whanau when we returned.

17. One of the prime issues regarding my background for me, was my identity. My father was Irish, my mother Ngati Maru. Sometimes I see this in my children.
18. One of my daughters has done very well in her academic schooling, however, among her non-Maori academic equals she is seen as a 'token Maori', and to top it off, among her own people a 'smarty pants'. Either way she couldn't win. I too, have experienced this attitude.
19. I think my life's background has helped me to better understand the problems that are faced everyday in my work at 'Te Korowai Hauora O Hauraki'.
20. My marae, Mataiwhetu, endorsed me at a meeting when I approached them about working with people around drug and alcohol abuse.
21. My experience and understanding of drug and alcohol and the effects of Maori more specially Maori of Hauraki comes from my own personal history and self-knowledge of addictive and violent behaviour and through my working life as a certificated Drug and Alcohol and Sexual Abuse Counsellor working with the 'cycle of violence'.
22. Before I begin discussing the effects of alcohol I would like to briefly discuss some of the historical experiences of alcohol by Maori:

- Pre-contact Maori Society

Although our people had things that were mind-altering such as tutu and rata, these were used by our people as rongoa Maori - to keep themselves well.

Connection between Land Sales and Alcohol

With the introduction of alcohol to Maori society, came dependence. My mother told me about one tupuna who sold land for a keg of beer.

■ The Goldfields

There were 101 hotels in Thames at the height of goldmining. One wonders what influence this had on our people.

- In an attempt to protect us, the Crown passed legislation to prevent the sale of alcohol to Maori. This was the original reason why marae were alcohol-free, but our tupuna in their wisdom elected to continue with this. Today, Hauraki has the most alcohol-free marae in New Zealand.

23. But that in itself has not protected Hauraki Maori from the effects of alcohol abuse, because of a number of factors. Many Maori who had drug and alcohol addictions were treated as mental patients during the 1950s - 1980s. This process brought shame to them and their whanau.

Whangai and Adoption

24. I believe that the change from the Whangai system to the Crown's adoption processes have had a detrimental effect upon Hauraki Maori. I see a lot of people who have lost their Maori identity. Alcohol is used to block off the pain of this; it is used as the sticking plaster.
25. In this way alcohol often becomes the most important member of the whanau. Suffering families often spend their money on alcohol and don't have enough to buy groceries. The general diminished responsibility of care by parents results. There is a clear link between alcohol and sexual and physical abuse.

Children and Young Persons Agency (CYPFA)

26. CYPFA based the family group conference on Maori models of dispute resolution. I object to the way it has been used to disempower our

whanau. I also find that I become involved in these through cases of alcohol and sexual abuse.

Recovery

27. I have to say, however, that one of the great joys of my job is seeing our people rehabilitate from alcohol abuse. They then want to know who they are and set about finding their whakapapa. They also go back to polytech, whare wananga and atarangi. Families become healthy again with alcohol being no longer a member of the whanau. They return to the marae and I see that they have dispensed with the shame they had of not knowing who they are. They claim their own world, their own healing, and begin a journey of discovery that lasts forever and ever.
28. Other things that concern me are:
 - the high numbers of young Maori women smoking. A recent survey found that Maori women of child bearing age that smoke has increased.
 - the social and economic system of Hauraki is such that marijuana is a cash crop.
 - Illegal stills continue to operate in Hauraki.
29. To cope with all these problems we need better resources. We need our own economic base.
30. Lastly, I would like to pay tribute to those who have come to see me and let me help them. In many ways, this is their story.