

IN THE MĀORI LAND COURT OF NEW ZEALAND  
WAIKATO-MANIAPOTO DISTRICT

Application No: A20100001098

IN THE MATTER of **HARATAUNGA 2C1**

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IN THE MATTER of an application pursuant to section 45/93 for the amendment of a Order made on 2 July 1962 setting aside Harataunga 2C1 as a Māori Reservation under section 439 of the Māori Affairs Act 1953

ON BEHALF OF Dean Katipa for and on behalf of the descendants of Heni Ngaropi

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF WILLIAM DONALD WILLIS**

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**McCaw Lewis**  
LAWYERS

### **Background/introduction**

1. My name is William Donald Willis. I am also known as Pīrerangi Tanara White.
2. I changed my name when I obtained my first passport as I had to go by my father's name, Willis, to get one. White (Waiti) is the name of my mother, Hine Mataera-i-te-Rangi White.
3. I am the eldest living descendent of Heni Ngaropi. I was brought up by Heni until I was about 12 years old. I was 18 or 19 years old when Heni passed away in 1971.
4. I currently live in Gisborne. I have been living back there for four or five years, although I live on and off in Australia.

### **Land is for Whanau**

5. Land was everything to Heni. But at the same time she would look at whether other whānau members needed land/needed a place to stay and, if so, she would give her land to them. Heni thought a lot about family, including extended family. Looking after whānau was important to her.
6. To my knowledge none of the land that Heni gave away during her lifetime was to anyone other than whānau.

### **Harataunga 2C1 – A Place for Whanau to Stay**

7. Heni inherited Harataunga 2C from her mother, Rora Te Rakahurumai. My brother, Parekura (Paddy), told me about the history of Harataunga 2C - how Te Aitanga-a-mate, Te Aowera and Te Whānau-a-Rakairoa ("the three hapū") were originally gifted land at Harataunga by a Ngāti Tamatera Chief.
8. Paddy did all of the research on Harataunga to support the Waitangi Tribunal claim that he made on behalf of the three hapū. We used to talk about his research a lot over the phone when I lived in Australia.
9. Paddy's evidence in support of our claim, which was accepted by the Waitangi Tribunal, included the following:

- (a) That the land at Harataunga was a tuku whenua to the three hapū so that Te Rakahurumai and the crews of his schooners could rest on their trade journeys from the east coast to Auckland and to create a strategic military alliance.
  - (b) That from 1852 to the date of his evidence the descendants of the three hapū occupied Harataunga and this occupation maintained the customary rights of mana whenua and mana moana to the land and harbour of Harataunga (I add that this has continued to date).
- 10. I used to go with Heni to Harataunga as a young boy, although I never understood the significance of the place in those days.
- 11. My understanding has always been that Heni gifted Harataunga 2C1 to the three hapū for a marae and for gardens so that the land could be used/cultivated. She did that so that the whānau had somewhere to stay when they went to Harataunga – a place that was ours, that no one could tell us to leave.

#### **No Gift to Residents**

- 12. I do not think that Heni knew that the land had been set aside for the residents of Kennedy's Bay in 1962. If she had have known she would have told the family. All of the family knew when she made her application in 1954 so there is no reason I can think of as to why she would not tell the family about the 1962 application and/or order.
- 13. I also do not believe that Heni would have agreed to the beneficiaries being changed to the residents of Kennedy's Bay:
  - (a) There were a number of people outside of the whānau who lived at Harataunga at the time and Heni would not have given the land to people that were not whānau.
  - (b) There were people who lived in Harataunga at the time that Heni did not like. She would call them all sorts of names and swear about them in Māori.
  - (c) To Heni it was a "no no" to give land over to a Pākehā. I remember my grandfather sold some land once and she really went off at him. She said

that he must never do that – that if he is going to give land away then give it to someone in the whānau who needs it.

(d) There were not many Pākeha that Heni got on with and she did not approve of whānau members marrying Pākeha. My mother was not allowed to marry my father or Parekura's father as they were both Pākeha. So she would not have agreed to her land being gifted to Pākeha, which is what has happened because of the 1962 order.

14. In addition, Heni would not have agreed to Harataunga 2C1 being used as a sports recreation ground. To my knowledge, none of the marae in her whakapapa was used for sporting purposes and the land that she gifted in her lifetime was never gifted for sporting purposes.
15. Heni was involved with a number of marae where some of the land was used for gardens. I can think of two examples of blocks that she has gifted that were both gifted to whānau for marae and gardens. These include the land she gifted for Hiruharama Marae at Ruatoria and Tuatini Marae at Tokomaru Bay.

#### **How this has affected us**

16. It is frustrating to know why our great grandmother gifted Harataunga 2C to the three hapū and that her intentions have been ignored. This has meant that our whānau on the east coast have been excluded when it was meant to be their marae too. For us as descendants, not being included as beneficiaries of our great grandmother's land is hurtful.
17. Not being part of the beneficiaries' class meant that we were unable to have a say at the hui in November 2009 (for voting on who the interim trustees of the Harataunga Marae Trust should be). Whānau members, including myself, felt that our rights had been taken away from us. We thought that we had done everything that we needed to do through the Maori Land Court to have a say as descendants but when we got to the hui we were told that the succession process was not complete and that we could not vote as we were not residents. We had to stand by and watch while decisions were made by non-whanau and Pākeha members about our great grandmother's land.