

UNDER

The Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER

of an application for resource consents for Project Next
Generation by Port Otago Limited

AND

IN THE MATTER

of the submission lodged by Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF
TONI EVANS
ON BEHALF OF TE RŪNANGA O ŌTĀKOU**

INTRODUCTION

Aoraki te mauka

Waitaki te awa

Kati Huirapa te hapū

Kāi Tahu Kāti Mamoe me Waitaha ka iwi

Ko Russell me Solomon te ikoa whānau no Arowhenua

Ko Russell me Wesley te ikoa whānau no Ōtākou

Ki ora koutou katoa

1. My name is Toni Evans
2. My grandparents Ned and Kitty Russell from Arowhenua, at Temuka, brought all the whānau here to Ōtākou not just to visit but to eat kaimoana as well.
3. Although I grew up at Temuka around the Arowhenua Marae and was taught how to catch kai in the rivers and ponds, my whānau would visit our kaik whānau regularly. We would stay with Boyd and Nancy Russell, and their whānau, Raewyn, Khyla, and Eleanor, and all their children, a very large extended whānau living at Te Rauone Beach.
4. When we came to stay as kids, our tauas would send us out with a bucket to collect cockles, but if they fitted in your mouth they were too small, we had to sit out the front of Uncle Boyd's and try each one. The cockles were collected from the tidal flats out on Te Rauone Beach. I can still hear my taua saying pour boiled water over the top of them cockles, until they were just opened and not before. Before I knew it they were taken out and eaten.
5. Whānau from Otakou would collect kaimoana like crabs and bubu (Ōtākou / Kāi Tahu kupu for pupu) – or periwinkles collected from Wellers Rock and the rock groine at Te Rauone Beach, and what we called apple cockles which were sea tulip or kaeo, which were sliced open and eaten raw or fed to the fish from a hook to catch the next big one.
6. My uncles were commercial fisherman from the Ōtākou Wharf, they would bring in flounders, and sharks, just the things we needed.
7. I moved back about 11 years ago to Otakou, met my partner Rachel Wesley and we have raised our five children here.

KŌRERO / DISCUSSION

8. Collecting kai moana is a regular thing and part of providing kai for the family. I collect cockles, bubu, karengo (sea lettuce), crabs occasionally, and fish provided by whānau. Karengo is washed well, patted dry, sliced and then fried up, or used as greens in a boil up.
9. I talked about how I gathered kai moana for an Otago Daily Times article, "Feeding the Whānau" (which is attached to my evidence). Afterwards, people would come up to me in the supermarket and joke "you're a long way from the beach".
10. Our whānau come down to the beach and help gather kai moana, usually twice a week.
11. The harbour has changed a lot since I was coming down as a child. I was quite surprised when I came back how things had changed. When I first came back I noticed the lack of dunes and that the area uncovered at low tide had really pulled back closer to Te Rauone Beach.
12. When I was growing up you used to be able to take a dingy out to the channel and look down, the water was sparkling clear and you were able to see the bottom. As far as I can remember the area of the harbour out to the channel had more cockles than there is today.
13. We were able to collect kai moana further out on the sand beds but the dredging of the harbour has reduced the amount of cockles out there on our piece of paradise
14. I am concerned that in a few generations there will be no kaimoana in the harbour. My tamariki are asking "what will happen to our cockles"? Where will we get them when they run out as more and more people collect our kai moana from Te Rauone Beach.
15. I believe that making the channel deeper to allow bigger ships to enter the harbour will make the cockle beds smaller.
16. That concludes my evidence.

Thank you.



FRESH

For generations local Maori have gathered food from the sea, harbour and rivers, and many still do. **Charmian Smith** listens to some of the stories about food gathering and tastes some local kai moana.



Feeding the whanau

PATIKI (flounder), tuaki (cockles), tuna (eel) and titi (muttonbird) were among the staple foods of many local Maori, and they are still delicacies they expect to find on their tables, according to Moana Wesley.

She and other Ngai Tahu shared stories — and flavours — of what they ate when they were growing up and how they gathered it, at Otago Museum recently. Taste of Kai Tahu Kai was organised by Moana Wesley and Suzanne Ellison in conjunction with “Mo Taitou: The Ngai Tahu Whanui exhibition”.

Patiki (flounder)

Raewyn Harris told stories of how she and her whanau used to go floundering off Te Rannone beach at Orakou. A torch made of a rag soaked in kerosene in a syrup tin with a handle and a spear made of a broom handle with a nail on the end were all you needed. Flounder were so plentiful you would be stepping on them, but now you were lucky to find one the size of a hand in the harbour, she said.

Michelle McDonald comes from a family of fishermen. Her father, Matenga Taiaroa, fished on the West and East coasts and the Chatham Islands, and eats fish every day — he’d had flounder for breakfast that morning. Her brother, and she and her husband, are also commercial fishers, fishing Ngai Tahu quota with boats based at Orakou.

She demonstrated her favourite way of cooking flounder. It’s a good choice if you don’t want to fillet fish, she said.

To cook flounder, clean and gut it, and scrape the scales off both sides. Heat a little oil and butter in a pan, dip the whole fish in flour, and fry it, pale side down first. Turn and cook the other side after a few minutes — the time depends on the heat of your pan. The flesh should be cooked but still moist. Use two forks to pull the flesh apart. When you have eaten the flesh on top, the bone frame will lift off easily so you can eat the other side.



Toni Evans offers a plate of tuna (eel).

Tuna (eel)

Toni Evans takes children whitebaiting and fishing for eels at various estuaries, but he would not reveal the location of his mahinga kai (food gathering places). Every family keeps their favourite places secret, he said. They return to them for generations — many whitebait stands have belonged to the same family for 70 or 80 years. But these days there are fewer eels, whitebait, paua, or mussels available than in the past.

The silver-bellied, short-fin eels found in estuaries are said to be sweeter than the long-fin eels found further up rivers. William (9) and Oliver (11) Dawson go eeling with their parents. They get in the water and spear them with a nail on the end of a broom handle, Oliver said. Their father slits them, removes the gut and backbone, and hangs them in the shade for a few days to dry.

To cook eel, Mr Evans cuts it into short pieces, grills them in the oven for about 30 minutes then keeps them in the fridge until needed. Before serving, he browns the pieces lightly in a pan with a little oil. Eel is an oily fish with lots of healthy omega 3.

He also had a few huhu grubs which can be found in decaying logs. They were a useful source of protein if you were travelling or lost in the bush, he said.

They can be eaten raw — hold the head end and bite off the rest, or cook briefly in butter and garlic, and eat the same way. The one I ate tasted a bit like fish — although that might be because they were cooked in the pan after the flounder and eel.



Flounder and eel cooking.