

I left the hearing at lunch time to come home and write reports-I haven't written a sentence. I have walked around shaking my head fearful of the direction our world and our farming community is heading in.

My back story: we have only been guardians of Glen Dararach Farm for less than 25yrs. This is a nano second in evolution. In the short time we (and hopefully future generations) will be here, means we must take the greatest care and have the unwavering respect for this patch of paradise we call home.

We arrived when I was pregnant with our first born. When we had 2 toddlers and a new 3rd son, we had the privilege of hosting Dr Yann-Pierre Montelle (a rock art specialist who travelled the world specializing in indigenous rock art) who Ngai Tahu had organized to visit. He brought out a red pigment one day, his 2yr old son and our boys mixed a paste and painted river stones, making representations of the drawings they had study on our bluff. Grant and our boys spent days climbing around the cliffs making GPS records updating these from the 1970's records (again with Matt and Tim-2 enthusiastic young men who shared so much knowledge organized by Ngai Tahu). Our boys found a new drawing that was not on record!! I know it will be known to the family who drew it but it was a very exciting moment for our family that this was now in the history books. The sharing of knowledge, lighting the fire of discovery, instilling the precious value this taonga will remain part of our family story wherever we go.

When Herman Frank visited monitoring the skinks and geckos around our house, our boys were out there checking how many droppings in the tile pile each morning. The excitement was real. It was suspected our cat Lotto was eating some. She put on about 2kg as the boys kept feeding her to reduce the chance of her hunting these precious treasures scuttling around our garden.

This sharing of knowledge, opening of learning and allowing understandings of others passion and history instils a drive to do the best for the land you are responsible for. It excites and inspires you to learn more, to invest in the taonga. It allows acceptance and appreciation.

I can't begin to express-I just can't find the words- to explain the insult it is to get forwarded a map of the land you tend, this map having a crude crayon mark circled on it suggesting this area needs a title, it is special, you need to take care of it. It is an automatic assumption the present landowners are cultural and environmental terrorists. It makes it scary, as the rules, regulations and requirements that inevitably follow a title, are dynamic and vast.

It is the unknown. The unknown is frightening. The unknown encourages division. The unknown encourages racism and small minds. It encourages walls to go up and gates to shut.

I am concerned for the direction of our society and our farming community. The present classifications and the process that we are experiencing reduces acceptance and increases the unknown.

Imagine if guardians of the land had access to specialists to support and advise, to increase knowledge, acceptance, and growth. Imagine if farmers were seen as responsible and caring custodians with support to action sound practices.

Thank you for your time in reading this. Jud Baynes, Glen Dararach Farm.

