

Tanya Peterson


30/6/2015

Email: soldiersclaim@hotmail.com

Legal Aid Tribunal

WELLINGTON

Information for the Waitangi Tribunal.

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Tanya Peterson and I am representing this claim on behalf of my father, who is next of kin for this claim. At the present age of 96, he is also a veteran from WW11.

I wish to file an official complaint against Janet Mason, of Pacific Law Limited, Wellington, for breach of duty.

Over the past 5 years Janet Mason has been our lawyer, representing my father, who is seeking compensation for the loss of land, which was densely populated with native trees. The land and trees were confiscated by the Government of the day, under Section 118 of the Land Act, 1924. The trees were subsequently milled as a direct consequence of this unfair and unjust confiscation.

Janet Mason has been in receipt of a substantial amount of funding, supposedly for work done on our behalf.

An appeal against the Legal Aid Tribunal decision under the Official Information Act which was due on Friday, 29 May 2015, four days before the submissions were due. I contacted Janet Mason to enquire about the current status of this appeal. She became very hostile and asked me not to ring her office again. As a result, Janet refused to continue with our claim. This was now left up to my researcher and myself to submit the appeal. Janet retained a large amount of our documents which my researcher and I had compiled over several years.

When Janet came to Rotorua on the 1/12/2011 to interview my father, she advised us to continue with the research as we knew what we were looking for. On Janet's instructions, we continued with the research and had fulfilled everything which had been requested and gone beyond what she had required.

Example: On the 29/11/2011, Janet Mason did not seem to need any further documentation for our claim, as there was a considerable amount of documentation already provided. Janet only seemed interested in the amount of timber which had been milled in the district and it's subsequent value then, compared with prices which that same timber would fetch today. We did not receive that paperwork either from Janet, which we had supplied, and continued to supply for a further 4 years.

I contacted LSA, Rotorua, to request a copy of the complete set of documentation which Janet Mason would have submitted. When I received the documentation, the papers indicated that she was in constant contact with me, which is not true. There had been very little contact from her. Many phone calls, E-mails, and letters were instigated by me to find out where we were with the claim. There was little response from her, but when she did reply she would say that she is aware that this is taking a long time, and would now devote 100% attention to our claim. She informed me that she had finished with the Treaty of Waitangi, and that as a result of her work, LSA owed her a considerable amount of monies.

I have not seen any evidence whatsoever of the time put in by Janet. However when I was reading through my LSA files, I noticed that Janet had been asking for more funding to further her research. I am still waiting on an interim report from 2011, as we had provided Janet with a very large amount of detailed historic documents which went into great depth. At the time, Janet said that this was all she required.

I then made a request to Janet to return two of the files so I could continue with my own further research which would be added to the research already done and then I would return the complete set of documentation to Janet as soon as possible. I waited for several months and there was no response.

As my researcher, Wayne, was making a trip to Wellington, and given that there had been no response from Janet, I gave at least one week's notice that he would be calling into her office to collect the two files on my behalf.

Janet's legal secretary told Wayne, as they are not receiving any legal aid, they would not retrieve the files out of storage.

A few days later Janet was adamant that she had returned all of our documents. A week later a representative of Janet Mason contacted me over the phone, to advise that they have located the files and would be there in a few days after they had photocopied the files. This was in contrast to Janet's claim that she had already returned the files.

A few days later after contacting them, a small number of documents were delivered to me. Many of the documents had not been returned, and those which were returned were not in the original format (colour, timber cruise sheets, land titles, renewable leases, 2126, re-valuation, historic as well as present date, diaries, military letters, historic photos, journals, books etc.)

We were very distressed with the lack of respect shown by a law firm, with regards to the preservation of our documents and to see several years of our research destroyed.

I have since made a request, under the Official Information Act, for all documents to be returned, given that only a small amount of our documentation had been returned to date.

It is of great concern that some of our original documentation had been tampered with. Example: 1-4-1927 Lands and Survey. 26/19615 file, Janet has removed from our document Sec 118 of the land act 1924 and also removed government dated stamps. On the back of some of the documents were typed notes dated and signed by Janet on the 13/10/2011 and stamped "Confidential Draft". These were not at all directly related to our claim, and indicative of the fact that our original documents could have been used by Janet for other Treaty of Waitangi claims.

In summary, as a result of Janet's incompetencies, our family has not only wasted a substantial number of years in conducting the research to validate our claim, but the funding allocated to Janet, to pay for her for the work that we did, so that it could be presented to the court, has been exhausted.

On my behalf of my father, who is not getting any younger, I want justice and wish for our claim to proceed so that compensation can be awarded. I feel that it would be just and reasonable for Janet Mason to continue to present our claim, at no further cost to my family.

I trust that you will give my letter your utmost consideration and that there will be a favourable outcome for my father.

Yours Sincerely

Tanya Peterson
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Claimant