

Sasha's Anzac Day Speech

Kia ora koutou,

I'm going to take a slightly different path to Aayan and talk about my own personal connection to Anzac Day.

Alongside the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, there were also British, French and Indian forces fighting at Gallipoli. My great-great-great grandfather, Reuben Tilley, was present on the 25 of April 1915, as a part of a Field Ambulance manned by troops of the British Army's Royal Army Medical Corps.

A Field Ambulance was a mobile front line medical unit, responsible for the care of casualties of one of the brigades of the division. While many remember those who charged into battle, others, like Reuben Tilley, ran to care for the wounded. After the war he was awarded a military medal, for bravery in the field.

But I wouldn't have discovered this connection, if I hadn't had a conversation with my Grandma about what Anzac Day means to her. How many other stories like this remain untold, sitting in the memories of our kaumātua, waiting to be heard and passed on?

So, to any young people here today I encourage you to talk to the older generations in your family and take responsibility for educating yourselves about your tupuna so that their legacy can be carried on with pride. And to the older generations, if you are asked, take the opportunity and share what you know.

Remembrance is not automatic. It depends on all of us. If we don't ask, don't listen and don't carry these stories forward, they will eventually fade.

'Ki te kore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi'; Without foresight or vision, the people will be lost. Many of us are the lucky ones, who have lived lives untouched from the strife of wars, but we must not forget that in order to look to the future we have to acknowledge our pasts.

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them.

Sasha