

**Title:** Searching for Tūpuna

**Sub-theme:** Whakarewa ake ōu whakaaro

**Presenter:** Nicky Andrews

**Abstract:**

In 1997, The Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture at the University of Washington opened the "Pacific Voices" exhibition, a collaborative, community-informed exhibition of indigenous cultures throughout the Pacific Rim. Twenty years later, Nicky Andrews (Ngāti Paoa) visited and connected with the exhibition, as an MLIS candidate at the University of Washington. Nicky collaborated with the Burke during her studies, to create more accurate and up-to-date descriptions of the Māori taonga on display. Utilizing Ngā Upoku Tukutuku (Māori Subject Headings), she attempted to resist the colonial perspectives of descriptions used in the physical spaces and the catalogue. This project also allowed Nicky to focus her studies on Mātauranga Māori and indigenous knowledge - which are included in MLIS accreditation and professional registration in Aotearoa, but not the United States.

The Burke collection also includes 962 Māori photographs (albumen prints, slides, negatives) spanning the 19th Century, which were donated to the museum in 1953. These photographs had no identifying information in the museum database, and although digitized, were not published online. Nicky attempted to identify the subjects in these photographs, and recognized that they included great Rangatira, and that many may have living descendants. Additionally, among the photographers were historically significant artists such as Josiah Martin and Elizabeth Pullman.

This session describes the search for Tūpuna, and some of the challenges and collaborations that grew from trying to identify Māori print materials in the United States, as a sole member of the Māori community. It also describes the community of care and opportunity that can grow from responsible and emotive stewardship, and ways digital humanities can be utilized to honour these Tūpuna. As the Burke museum prepares to open a new building in 2019, Nicky and the Burke staff seek ways to update the databases and digitally display the Tūpuna photographs, while honouring the ties to family and land which connect us all.