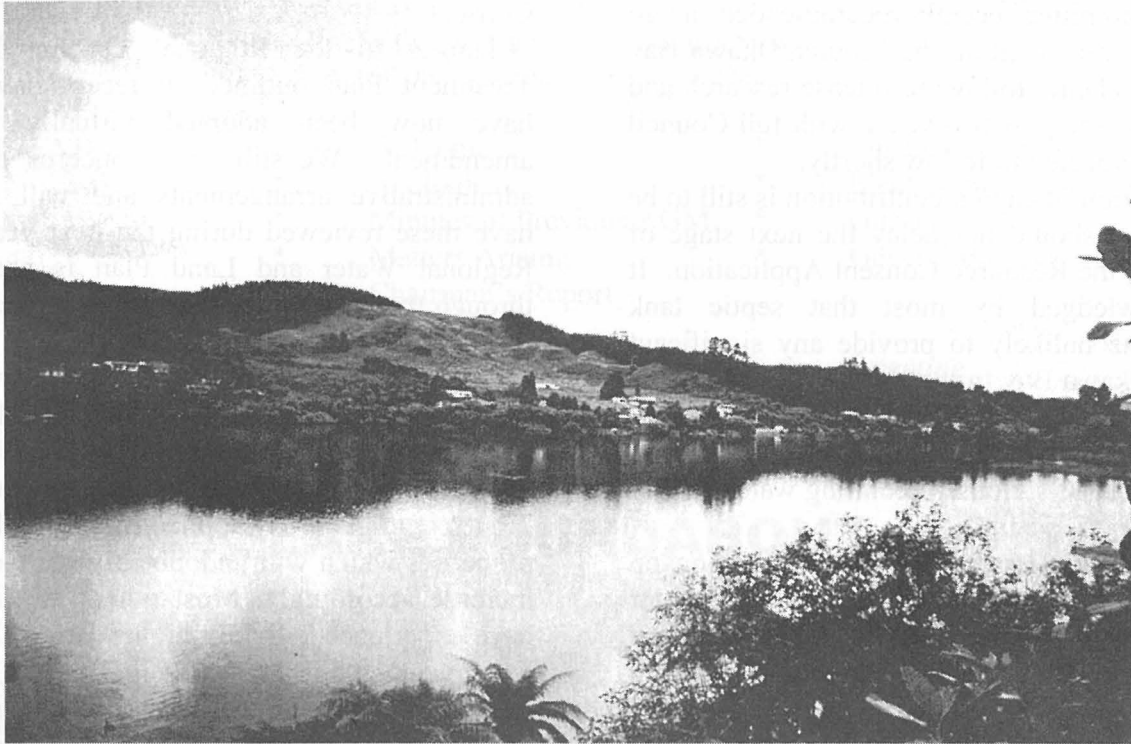




## *Lake Rotoiti Ratepayers & Residents Association*



Ema Morehu - Old Home Site

7 December 2000

### **Kia Ora**

### **Greetings from the Lake**

With Christmas beckoning, many will be turning their thoughts to a bit of rest and recreation and hoping that summer eventually gets into full flight so that the glorious majesty of the lake can be enjoyed to the full. It is perhaps time again to reflect upon the various changes that take place each year, some more discernible than others, things such as the slowly deteriorating water quality in the western arm, the encroachment of forestry around the catchment, the steadily increasing influx of visitors and holiday makers, all of which help to create a little extra pressure on maintaining that ever important environmental balance that we seek to preserve for our own pleasure and that of future generations.

It is indeed fortunate that a great many Rotoiti residents and property owners share a common vision towards the preservation and enhancement of the lake and its environs. This is evidenced by the several local groups formed to promote such ideals. This Association continues to be the largest ratepayer group in the District with more than 350 financial members (property owners) from around the lake. This no doubt provides us with a good deal of clout when presenting viewpoints and pursuing benefits on behalf of our communities.

We sincerely thank all of our subscribers, sponsors, advertisers and others who have contributed to the cause and/or offered help and assistance throughout the year. May we urge you to maintain your support which is essential to our ongoing existence and success. To each and every one of you, our very best wishes for a joyous Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

With 2002 almost at a close, we can reflect back on a number of issues where satisfactory progress has been made, along with several matters that continue to cause concern. RDC's Works Committee recently recommended the go ahead for implementing the Mourea/Okawa Bay sewerage scheme following intense research and debate over the past two years, with full Council approval expected to follow shortly.

The question of capital contribution is still to be decided but should not delay the next stage of processing the Resource Consent Application. It is acknowledged by most that septic tank diversion is unlikely to provide any significant relief to Okawa Bay in the short term. However, there is general agreement that it is a necessary first step towards the long term arrest and improvement of seriously declining water quality in the bay.

Moreover, this issue has focused attention on taking a much more serious look at water degradation in Rotorua's lakes. Both RDC and EBOP have commenced initiatives which are intended to provide meaningful outcomes.

Gisborne Point residents can look forward to construction of a walkway between Wharetoroa Drive and Emery's Store sometime in 2003 following further submissions to this year's RDC Draft Annual Plan. Council also agreed to provide material and resources towards the upgrading of the roadway through the Motutawa Urupa Reserve which has also been the subject of significant environmental rehabilitation over the past four years through the efforts of local hapu backed by assistance from several funding agencies. At long last, following persistent pressure from this Association, the Lakes Inspectorate has taken delivery of its new boat. By all accounts it is performing right up to expectations. However, this milestone has been dampened somewhat by recent maritime legislation which will mean the loss of our voluntary and part-time lakes controllers, as explained elsewhere.

The Okere Refuse Transfer Station is now up and running albeit for only two afternoons per week. RDC have undertaken to review the operation again in March following the busy holiday season. The skip sites at Mourea and Taheke Road have now been closed. Whangamoa Drive residents now have a rubbish

bag collection point to serve their area. The proposed Transfer Station at Waitangi Springs is on hold pending appeals to the Environment Court over EBOP's decline of the Resource Consent.

Changes to the Regional On-Site Effluent Treatment Plan outlined in recent newsletters have now been adopted virtually without amendment. We still have concerns over the administrative arrangements and will seek to have these reviewed during the next year. The Regional Water and Land Plan is continuing through the submission stages and is likely to go to Hearings around April 2003.

The three-yearly property revaluations have recently been completed by Quotable Value New Zealand and most would have now received their updates. It is understood that increases of up to 37 percent have been applied mainly to lakeside properties which will undoubtedly see their rates increase accordingly. Most others are likely to have experienced slightly higher land values but lower capital values.

Congratulations to the West Rotoiti Fire Unit on the relocation and upgrading of their new Station which was officially opened on 10 November. These volunteers put in a tremendous amount of time and effort in helping to provide emergency fire and rescue services around the community and deserve our full support.

Please note that the Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, 12 January 2003. If you wish to find out more about your Association, or have an issue that you would like to air, do attend. Better still, you might seriously consider standing for committee.

As with any organisation, especially voluntary groups like ours, it is always desirable to have some fresh enthusiasm and new perspectives or ideas. Our committees have put in a lot of time and effort in the past, with some members serving for many years, but there comes a time when people for whatever reason need to move on and look to others to play a part. It does not have to be onerous and can be stimulating and bring a measure of satisfaction.

More importantly, I believe that ratepayer groups like ours are necessary and have a role to play in promoting and guarding the interests of the community.

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

# Lake Rotoiti Ratepayers & Residents Association

to be held at

Pikiao Rugby League Clubrooms, Takinga Street, Mourea  
10.00am Sunday 12 January 2003

### AGENDA:

- |   |                         |   |                       |
|---|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| * | Welcome                 | * | Financial Report      |
| * | Apologies               | * | Election of Committee |
| * | Minutes of Previous AGM | * | Guest Speakers        |
| * | Matters Arising         | * | General Business      |
| * | Chairman's Report       |   |                       |

*Light Refreshments available at conclusion of meeting*

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## LAKE ROUNDABOUT

**Ohau Channel Environmental Status.** In response to recent concerns expressed over the deterioration of the Ohau Channel over the years, Environment BOP advise that it is one of only 10 sites in the Bay of Plenty which are monitored monthly. During ten years of monitoring, they have detected no major change in the overall condition of the Channel. Water in the Channel is well oxygenated and temperature fluctuations are normal. It is acknowledged that visual clarity is at times not good. This is mainly due to the large expanse of shallow water at the Lake Rotorua outlet where prevailing winds tend to blow into the Channel mouth causing a large amount of re-suspended sediment from these shallows to enter the Channel which in turn contribute towards gradual silting. Nutrients entering the Channel are generally controlled by the amount of oxygen present, and bacterial levels measured have been well within the safety guidelines.

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**Jetty Licenses.** Some members believe that RDC fees for jetty licenses are being used unfairly towards the cost of lake patrols. They point to Taupo eg where lake users are charged a launching fee to help fund these costs. RDC say that the fees reflect the cost of administering private jetties along with a charge for occupation

of the lake bed. Suggestions for launching fees have been declined because of impracticalities and cost of administration in relation to Rotorua's lakes. It is difficult to assess whether or not current jetty fees are justified. We note that some concessions have been made towards extra costs for jetties greater than 15 square metres, and individual owners should perhaps take the matter up with RDC if they remain unhappy with aspects of charging.

There may be consternation however, over recent reports that Environment BOP are considering the possibility of implementing 'coastal' occupation charges for owners of marinas, marine farms, wharfs, jetties and boat ramps, or even a duck shooter's maimai following a consultants report which suggests that such charging would provide funding for a wide range of areas, help promote a more efficient allocation of space, and encourage potential applicants to apply only for an area they seriously considered using to deter speculation.

Councillors declined a staff recommendation to proceed with the proposed plan pending further clarification of the options. It was noted that any proposal would have to be subject to 'full public consultation'. Hopefully, lessons learnt from the inadequacy of the consultation process with regard to the Kaituna Catchment debate will this time prevail.



# MOUREA / OKAWA BAY SEWERAGE SCHEME

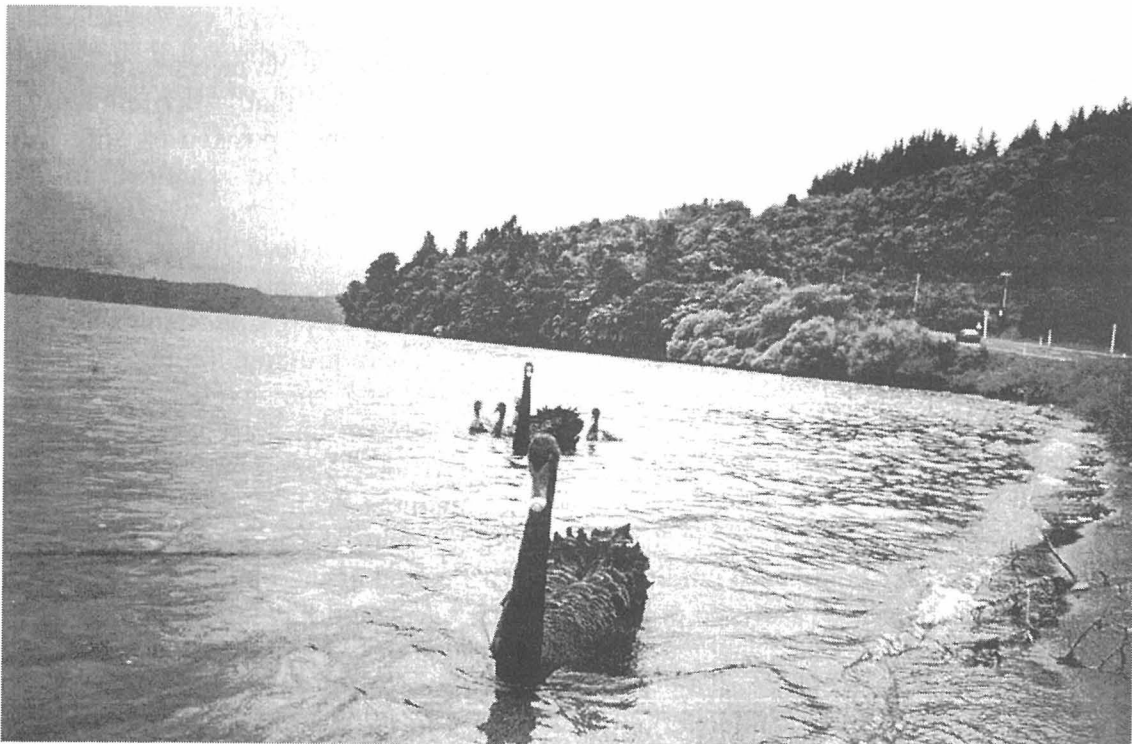
The (gradually deteriorating) water quality in our lakes and waterways has become a highlighted issue over the past 12 months or so. A number of local community organisations including LRRRA have been involved in pursuing debate and discussion with our local bodies through submissions, workshops and meetings with the object of promoting more research into the likely reasons for the decline, and determining practical options to deal with the problems, sooner rather than later.

The main focus has been on Okawa Bay which has been plagued by blue-green algal blooms over the past several summers. These algal blooms produce toxins which can be harmful to human health through direct contact. An in-depth study of this Bay carried out by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) and presented at a public workshop on 20 September provided further insight into why such events are occurring. Whilst understanding the issues can be complex for many of us, it now seems fairly evident that the main cause of the problem is the amount of nutrient (particularly nitrogen) which has accumulated in the sediments (bed) of Okawa Bay over a great many years, most of it from natural causes, along with a decreasing amount of oxygen in the (bottom) waters, usually during

summer. Sufficient oxygen is necessary to control the release of these nutrients which are the main contributor to the production of algal blooms.

It has been assumed by many that sewage from septic tanks is a major source of the nutrients entering Okawa Bay. However, NIWA estimates that such input is relatively low compared to the amounts released from the sediments, more particularly over summer. Tests have also indicated a much greater exchange flow between water in Okawa Bay and that in the western end of Lake Rotoiti than originally thought. This will influence any proposal to introduce a 'refreshment' system.

NIWA conclude that, in the short term (ie 10-20 years), removal of sewage and/or any diversion of water from say the Ohau Channel is unlikely to result in substantial improvement to the water quality. However, there is general agreement amongst the experts that removal of sewage nutrients from Okawa Bay along with gradually improving water quality in Lake Rotorua and the western basin of Lake Rotoiti should help to provide the longer term benefits sought. Rotorua District Council is expected to signify approval for the Mourea/Okawa Bay sewerage scheme to proceed at their next full Council meeting.



Hinehopu

7 December 2000



## MOUREA / OKAWA BAY SEWERAGE SCHEME cont....

### ~~~ Funding Issues ~~~

In the last Newsletter, we reproduced our submission to RDC which included an outline of the concerns over more recent proposals to impose a capital contribution on Mourea/Okawa Bay property owners as part of any sewerage reticulation scheme. We put forward what we believe to be sound reasoning behind our objection to such proposals as a matter of principle and fairness.

A major consideration is the fact that all Rotorua ratepayers have contributed to the repayment of the \$11 million loan taken out to fund the urban scheme capital cost shortfall in 1991, and any communities who connect to new schemes will now continue to do so through their annual operational charge as part of the new equalisation policy. Urban ratepayers who became part of that initial scheme were not required to make any individual capital contribution.

Any new sewerage schemes in the District will only be implemented where the interests of public health and environmental integrity are paramount. This will primarily affect settlements close to the lakes. The lakes, and more particularly lake water quality, have been recognised as being of major strategic importance and benefit by most Rotorua Residents. On this basis, we made successful

submissions for the equalisation of operational costs for sewerage schemes across the District and it is contended that the same rationale applies to capital costs.

In addition, when District funding policy was revised in 2000/01, RDC agreed that the proposed new capital contributions for new sewerage schemes would not apply to the Mourea scheme on the basis of previous agreements with the community. It is accepted that current proposals are far more extensive and costly than originally intended. However, this merely reflects the need to address a wider problem than previously assessed.

We acknowledge that it may seem unfair that eg farmers in the South Ward should have to help pay for such schemes. However, they too derive considerable general funding for things such as rural road upgrading which are little used by the rest of the District community. In any event, we believe that any established anomalies between sectors can be addressed through the rating differentials.

At the end of the day, we simply seek to ensure that the final agreement on funding is fair and equitable for everyone having taken into account all of the principles involved. Council has made an undertaking to debate the matter thoroughly with our community prior to such decision.

## ROTOITI LAKE CRUISES

### M.V. HINEKURA



Your hosts, Ted & Gael Boucher  
Operating from Okawa Bay Lake Resort

- \* **Fishing (our speciality)**
- \* **Scenic Charters**
- \* **Barbecues**
- \* **Picnics**
- \* **Hot Pool Bathing and Evening Trips**

*Departs Okawa Bay Resort  
and other sites by arrangement*

**Business Phone (07) 362 4599    Home Phone (07) 362 4815**

**c/- P.O. OKERE FALLS, ROTORUA, N.Z.**

# LAKES REGULATORY AND MAINTENANCE

The District Council's Lakes Inspectorate unit has been systematically upgrading signage around all lakes and this is almost complete with the exception of the Ohau Channel which is currently being assessed to determine better options for increasing entrance safety. Buoyage is also up to date on Rotoiti and the Geographical Information System (GIS) is being used to capture all navigational aid data to compile an asset register. It will also provide information enabling the recording of numbers, positions, types and depths of buoys, beacons, isolated dangers, etc. New methods of setting up and securing buoys are currently being implemented and are expected to reduce losses from eg cutting as well as facilitating movement during storms.

It was estimated that more than 500 boats were present on Rotoiti on 1 October opening day and pressure from lake users is building up for what looks like being a hot summer. Behaviour has been generally good but overall control over the upcoming busy season is likely to be greatly tested given the impending changes to maritime legislation explained further on.

The new Lakes Inspectorate boat was launched in October and reports are that she has proved to be well up to expectations. Harbourmaster, Andrew Lang, has advised that the lifting equipment carried on board is providing for greater ease in recovering and installing navigation aids and moorings, and despite her weight, the vessel, christened 'Ra', is deemed to perform very capably in all conditions. Sea and survey trials were completed without concern. She has a high profile and was given a lot of exposure during the opening days of the fishing season.

Of great concern is the new Maritime Safety Authority legislation set to become effective on 1 February 2003 (in the middle of our busy

season) which will require all regulatory and commercial vessels to operate under 'Safe Ship Management' and carry survey certification. It will also require skippers of these vessels to possess 'minimum' qualifications.

This clearly has serious implications for our contracted and Honorary lakes inspectors, most of whom will be unable to comply without going to some considerable expense. This will severely compromise all of the lobbying and effort put in by LRRRA, in particular, which has seen us gain a part-time inspector to help patrol Rotoiti between December and March of each year. It is understood that a further appointment was planned for this summer to exclusively monitor the Okere arm. We wrote to both Council and our MP, Steve Chadwick, voicing our deep concern. However, it appears that dodgy commercial operators have forced the change and no concessions are likely.

In the meantime, it is believed that our part time inspector of the past few seasons, Rick Holden, is moving on. We wish to acknowledge Rick's work during this period in helping to make the lake a more enjoyable and safer environment for users.

RDC Lakes Inspectorate has put forward a proposal to purchase a further boat for backup patrol. The new Ramco 'Predator' is favoured at an indicative all-up cost of around \$58,000. If approved, it is intended to operate this craft by utilising (RDC) Warranted Officers as crew and calling on a pool of commercial skippers to mobilize it on a rostered basis.

While this may be all very fine, we do not believe that this will compensate for the loss of our contracted and Honorary lakes inspectors! There surely needs to be some greater flexibility in the law to allow for a continued seasonal presence on what is statistically the second busiest lake in the country in terms of lake users.

## Mobile Library Calendar

### Tuesday Route 2001/2002

#### Fortnightly from 14 May 2002

08.50 - 09.15 Wharetoroa Drive  
09.30 - 10.00 Rotoma School  
10.05 - 10.25 Rotoma Store  
10.30 - 10.50 Rotoiti School  
11.20 - 11.45 Okere Falls Store

The Mobile Library carries a good selection of

- \* Adult and Childrens
- \* Fiction
- \* Non-fiction
- \* Large print
- \* Magazines
- \* Talking books
- \* New Zealand Fiction & Non-fiction
- \* Music Cassettes and C.D.'s
- \* Videos

Special requests can be made for specific items.

# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF LAKE ROTOITI RATEPAYERS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION HELD AT PIKIAO RUGBY LEAGUE CLUBROOMS ON SUNDAY 13 JANUARY 2002

**PRESENT:** Jim Stanton (Chairman), Fred Whata (Dep Chairman), Mary Stanton (Secretary), Peter Carr-Smith, Bill Kingi, Richard Wilson (committee), Grahame Hall (Mayor, Rotorua), Cr Bill Cleghorn (EBOP), Cr Robin Ford (EBOP), Bob Gray (Acting Harbourmaster RDC), Bruce Seamer (RDC Lakes Inspectorate), Rick Holden (Lakes Inspector, Rotoiti) and approximately 25 residents and ratepayers.

**APOLOGIES:** Sandy Hall (Mayoress, Rotorua), Ted Hansen (Manager RDC), Cr Rosemary Michie (EBOP), Jim Nicklin (RDC), Ray and Colleen Bayers, Theo and Marjorie de Lange, Nick and Elizabeth Miller, Trevor Saxon-Crawford, Richard and Rosemary Solomon, Ted Thorne, Marcus and Jan Wilcox, Hapi Winiata.

*Peter Carr-Smith / Michael Gill  
Carried*

1. **OPENING.** The Chairman welcomed those present and thanked the invited guests for their attendance. The meeting commenced with a Karakia (prayer).

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM.** Held at the Pikiao Rugby League Clubrooms on 14 January 2001 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

*Richard Wilson / Michael Gill  
Carried*

3. **MATTERS ARISING.**

- a. **Lake Safety and Control.** Peter Carr-Smith highlighted a concern over the period of appointment for Rotoiti's designated Lake Inspector (currently Rick Holden) who had not been contracted to start until Boxing Day. It was noted that from late November when education schools closed, there was an advance influx of (mainly) students, many of whom were unsupervised and caused problems with their youthful 'exuberance' and lack of control. This situation obviates the need for our resident lakes inspector to be appointed a lot earlier. It was noted that statistically, Rotoiti was acknowledged as the second busiest lake in the country.

Several residents endorsed these concerns, relating various incidents contributing to them. Rick Holden advised that, of lake users stopped since Boxing Day, most were boats rather than jet-skis. He believed general behaviour on the lake had been good so far and could be attributed to ongoing education and publicity. However, it was noted that there were still significant numbers who travelled too fast close to shore, ski-ed in unauthorized areas, and travelled at nights without navigational lights.

Lindsay Brighthouse brought up the matter of replacement of the Lakes Inspectorate Boat which had still not been finalised after 3½ years lobbying from ratepayers. He cautioned RDC to think hard before letting out any private contract for the lakes maintenance programme. Residents fully appreciated the service received from RDC over the past 5 years and expected to be thoroughly consulted over any proposed changes.

The Association had expressed its dismay several times during the past year over the protracted progress being made in resolving the issue. It believed that a decision was now imminent. It was also noted that Environment BOP had now agreed to take responsibility for the funding of the maintenance and regulatory role on the Rotorua lakes which, it was hoped, would provide the opportunity for RDC to utilise the resulting budget surplus to further enhance resources for lakes control.

*A motion was proposed that:*

'The LRRRA formally request Rotorua District Council to employ a lakes inspector on Rotoiti from 1 October each year'

*Bob Armstrong / Richard Wilson  
Carried*



b. **Mourea Water Supply.** During the year, RDC had produced a report and recommendations regarding 'Small Scale Solutions for Water Supplies at Mourea'. Earlier, NIWA had carried out bore sampling in the area and identified a source adjacent to the Okawa Bay Reserve as having the best potential. A public meeting had been held on 5 August to discuss the options and, whilst not being well attended, reiterated a preference for a reticulated community supply. However, RDC had subsequently determined that this could only go ahead if at least 60 percent of those within the zones identified as requiring an external source of supply (as opposed to anyone adjacent to the main trunk ) supported it. Given the course of events, this appeared unachievable at present. RDC had now placed the matter back in the hands of the community. To progress any further, it needed input from those still requiring to upgrade. It was noted, with regret, that the issue had revolved full circle due in no small part to RDC's decision not to proceed with the Special Order in 1999 when it technically had 78 percent community support. Later proposals and time lapses had now fragmented the community making it more difficult to implement any viable proposition.

c. **Lake Water Quality / Lakeweed.** It was noted that the scientific symposium held in March 2001 had been a huge success and had resulted in several research programmes being implemented for the future, including a \$600,000 endowment from EBOP to establish a Chair in Lake Management and Research at Waikato University for a five year term. The AGM of the recently renamed Lakes Water Quality Society is to be held at the Taheke Marae on Monday, 28 January 2002.

d. **Wooden Boat Regatta.** Lindsay Brighthouse gave a brief outline of the programme proposed for this year to be held on Sunday, 3 February 2002.

e. **Private Jetties.** RDC has now included a discretionary clause in their policy which allows for individual circumstances to be considered in determining the fees structure.

f. **Replacement of Okere Jetty.** All outstanding work had now been completed to most resident's satisfaction.

g. **Footpath – Gisborne Point.** The Association had made submissions to this year's Draft Annual Plan and had subsequently received an undertaking from RDC to meet and discuss the matter further. Peter Carr-Smith had recently commenced dialogue with RDC Engineers and outlined proposals to date. This included further submissions to be forwarded by residents with support from the Association and other interested parties. A footpath similar to that being planned for Spencer Road, Tarawera was being sought. Bob Armstrong thanked the Association for its persistence in pursuing the issue.

h. **Mourea Boatramp.** During the latter part of 2001, the local fishing club had constructed a boatramp and jetty on private land adjacent to the Pikiao Rugby League Club.

i. **Proposed Okere Road Refuse Transfer Station.** During the course of the year, RDC had made a formal objection to the Environment Court in respect of several conditions imposed as part of its resource consent to construct the Transfer Station. It was hoped that these issues could be settled without a Hearing. Meantime, invitations to tender for the construction had recently been promulgated. This included the relocation of the Fire Station which was to be moved adjacent to the Transfer Station. It was noted that improvements to SH33 were to be carried out involving widening, sight lines and a right-turning bay at the junction with Okere Road.

Several residents re-stated their concerns over the proposed opening hours and the probability of increased dumping around the lake and inevitable consequences. It was believed that 7 day access was needed to help prevent these problems from escalating. This would also cater for the large number of absentee owners who needed a facility to dispose of household rubbish, often on a Sunday afternoon. It was again noted that the community would be consulted on these matters before the operation commenced.

Gisborne Point and other East Rotoiti residents expressed dismay at the proposed site for a Refuse Station at Waitangi Springs. The large population at East Rotoiti would find it onerous to travel that distance. It was felt that a facility should be planned closer to home. There were also concerns over the possible environmental effects to the Springs. It was explained that current policy provided for a maximum radius of 13km to a refuse site.

*A motion was proposed:*

'that the LRRRA adopt a recommendation that the opening hours for any Transfer Station be a minimum of weekend days and at least three week days'.

*Bob Armstrong / Richard Wilson*

*An amended motion proposed:*

'that the opening hours be seven days a week'.

*Lindsay Brighthouse / Tai Eru  
Carried*

5. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.** Presented by Jim Stanton and adopted by the meeting.

*Richard Wilson / Lindsay Brighthouse  
Carried*

6. **FINANCIAL REPORT.** The Financial Report and Audited Accounts were presented by the Chairman and accepted accordingly.

- a. **Subscription.** It was proposed that the subscription for 2002 remain at \$10 per resident /ratepayer family.
- b. **Election of Auditor.** Ivan Thomson of Te Akau Road had agreed to carry out the 2000/01 audit and would be available to continue this year. A letter of appreciation would be sent to Ivan for his services.

*Richard Wilson / Bob Armstrong  
Carried*

- c. **Honorarium.** Lindsay Brighthouse again brought up the matter of an Honorarium for the Secretary in recognition of continuing heavy workloads. It was noted that the Rules provided for the Committee to grant an Honorarium to the Secretary and/or Treasurer each year. It was agreed that this could be activated as and when required.

7. **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE.** The following were elected to the executive committee for 2002 in accordance with accepted procedures:

Gael Boucher	- Okere Falls	Nick Miller	- Te Akau Road
Jim Stanton	- Mourea/Okawa Bay	Fred Whata	- Okere Falls
Donald Calder	- Mourea	Richard Wilson	- Otaramarae
Peter Carr-Smith	- Gisborne Point	Hapi Winiata	- Rotoiti East
Bill Kingi	- SH33 Parcliffe		

*Tai Eru Morehu / Keith Smith  
Carried*

It was noted that 9 members were the minimum number required for the committee and that power existed to co-opt others to carry out specific tasks. It was also suggested that the subscription form sent out to property owners could include a section for expressing interest in assisting the Association and identifying areas of experience.

Lindsay Brighthouse noted the retirement of Secretary, Mary Stanton, following 13 years on the committee. He said that most within the community were aware of the dedication and hard work put in by Mary over these years and she deserved their thanks and appreciation for her invaluable contribution.

8. **GUEST SPEAKERS.** Mayor Grahame Hall, Cr Bill Cleghorn (EBOP) and Bob Gray (RDC) accepted invitations to address the meeting on matters related to their particular sphere of office. Subjects discussed and debated included:

Acknowledgement of work by Association and Committee.  
Composition of Councils elected this year.  
Retirement of District Manager.  
Rural Refuse Transfer Stations.  
Okawa Bay water quality and sewerage scheme.  
Review of Local Govt and Rating Powers Acts.

Local employment and related issues.  
Lakes management and water quality.  
Environment Enhancement Fund.  
Kaituna Catchment Scheme.  
State of the environment Report.  
Lakes Regulatory and Management.  
Problems with buoys and signage.  
New requirements for life jackets.  
Lakes incident reporting

## GENERAL BUSINESS

9. **RULES AMENDMENTS.** Following comments by our auditor, it was proposed that the following amendments be made to the Rules of the Association:

- a) Rule 6(1)(b) 'to receive the audited annual Accounts and Balance Sheet for the financial year ending on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of the preceeding November'
- b) Rule 9(1) 'the Executive Committee shall cause proper books of account to be kept and shall present to each Annual General Meeting a Statement of Financial Performance ( Income and Expenditure Account ) and Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) covering the previous Financial Year and duly submitted to the Honorary Auditor for inspection and report.

*Jim Stanton / Bill Kingi  
Carried*

10. **OKAWA BAY WATER QUALITY.** Following the resolution of last year's AGM to write to EBOP expressing grave concerns over the deteriorating water quality in Okawa Bay, the Okawa Bay Action group was formed with the purpose of gathering information and data intended to persuade RDC to implement a reticulated sewerage scheme for the area as a matter of priority. As a result of several comprehensive submissions to last year's Draft Annual Plan, RDC had budgeted an additional \$1 million in each of the years 2002/03 and 2003/04 to address lakeside sewerage problems.

A number of meetings had been held with RDC in recent months in pursuance of the issue although no specific commitments had yet been made. Don Atkinson of the Okawa Bay Action committee advised that a public meeting was planned for 18 January 2002 at Okawa Bay Lake Resort to further promote community concerns. EBOP and RDC representatives had been invited. It was noted that Okawa Bay had recently developed another severe algal bloom outbreak.

11. **OHAU CHANNEL.** Dorothy Mihaka highlighted a grievance long held by channel residents concerning the gradual deterioration of the channel bed following dredging and re-alignment some 40 years ago. The previous clear water and shingle beds had all but disappeared and much silting had occurred. Further development along the channel had exacerbated the problem. She sought the Association's help in seeking options for remedial action. Fred Whata outlined some of the history surrounding the channel re-alignment which was primarily designed to alleviate ongoing local flooding. This had been achieved to a fair extent but it was now unlikely that restoration of the bed was possible. However, the committee undertook to address the concerns to EBOP and seek comment.

12. **OKERE FALLS ISSUES.** Fred Whata raised concerns regarding several Okere issues, viz a) overgrown blackberry along the walkway linking Okere Falls and Okere Road required attention as it was severely impeding usage. b) willows along the lake margins were creating a traffic hazard through restricting sight lines along the State Highway. c) an area of unsealed road reserve directly in front of his residence was causing a dust nuisance from traffic ( including logging trucks ) using it as a pull-over. He sought the Mayor's intervention in remedying these problems.

13. **DISTRICT TOURISM.** Richard Wilson applauded RDC for its efforts in attracting tourism to the area. However, he held grave fears for its future if urgent priority action is not given to upgrading the airport to allow restoration of jet services. Mayor Hall outlined the present situation and stated that measures had been agreed upon to allow for some topping of the kahikatea trees, and extensions to the runway which will provide for the necessary improvements. These actions would be implemented as soon as possible.

14. **WEST ROTOITI FIRE UNIT.** Keith Smith advised that the Unit was soon to take delivery of its new fire tender which would help to restore their operational efficiency. The Chairman expressed the community's appreciation of the services provided by the Unit and the efforts of all local volunteers.

15. **ROTORUA DISTRICT MANAGER.** The Chairman noted the imminent retirement of Rotorua's District Manager, Ted Hansen, after some 15 years with RDC. His contribution to the District was acknowledged. In particular, his receptiveness and willingness to listen and assist in local issues has been much appreciated. The Association wished him well in his retirement.

16. **CLOSURE.** There being no further business, the meeting closed with a Karakia at 12.35pm.

**NB: These Minutes will be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting to be held Sunday, 12 January 2002. The Financial Report and Audited Accounts will be available at this meeting.**



## NEWS AND VIEWS

**Tourism Levy.** In July, the Queenstown Tourism Group called for legislative change to allow for a levy to be imposed to help pay for tourism marketing. This echoed concerns for a number of years over the amount of expenditure on this activity from our general rates (approximately \$1.2 million this year). We took this opportunity to again enter the debate with a letter to the Editor of the Daily Post. We noted that there remains a significant body of opinion that the substantial contribution from general rates cannot be sustained ad infinitum. Alternative methods of funding needed to be found.

The claims by tourist operators that the industry invests considerable amounts from its own coffers, and that ratepayers gain from an overall economic benefit to the community will inevitably remain a subjective argument. Whilst it is acknowledged that the visitor industry is

imperative to Rotorua's economy, it is evident that it also puts ever increasing pressure on the District's budget to upgrade and maintain our infrastructure and amenities.

Many smaller tourist towns overseas, who lack the size and prosperity to sustain the burden of funding both marketing and enhanced facilities, impose a bed tax or similar as a means of subsidising such expenditure. It is contended that a typical charge of \$1-3 per visitor night is not likely to be too onerous and could save Rotorua ratepayers more than \$1 million per annum.

Whilst greater targeting of the commercial sector as practiced in Queenstown and Taupo is deemed to be unfair by some, it is perhaps not unreasonable to consider the option of a levy such as a bed tax to relieve the general ratepayer also. Many of us believe that the issue merits further debate amongst all affected parties.



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- HARDWARE
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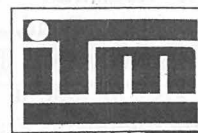
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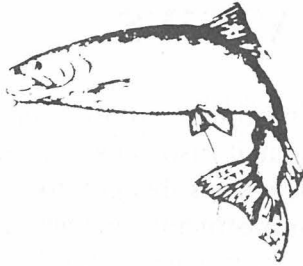
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## ANGLERS' CORNER



Since the new season's opening on 1 October, results appear to be on a par with the previous few years – the big ones are few and far between. Chatting to an experienced fisherman who participated in the recent three-day competition, I learnt that he was not dissatisfied with his weekend takings – just more than a little disappointed at the lack of trophy size catch.

I have noticed more than the usual activity along the Okere Arm in recent times, but this always seems to be when the weather is particularly inclement and the howling westerly winds prevail. There is no evidence of fish in numbers being caught in this area. Whilst not intending to be cynical, it is noted that in a few feet of water, depth finders can show an inanga to look like a big brown. On the whole, there have been far less than usual boats about for this time of year, also confirmed by observers a little further down the lake. This could be attributable to some very changeable weather as well as a lack of good

fishing. Fly fishing at the Ohau Channel has to be the pick for best spot in west Rotoiti. I have received many gleeful reports from well satisfied locals, long before visitors became aware of the consistent yields. Indeed, some large fish up to 8kg have been taken here this season.

Unfortunately, I do not have much data on results from East Rotoiti. However, the facts are probably somewhat self-evident – hatchery fish continue to be released and prevail in that area. Lures that are working are the black and white toby with either red or white dots, brown and white Tasmanian devil, Dorothy Gray and silver ghost for harling, not forgetting the tried and true Parson's Glory.

I am pleased to have been in contact with the new manager of the Eastern Region Fish & Game hatchery. There is a definite ray of hope that fish releases could soon resume at Rotoiti's western end. This has occurred only once since Len Newman's retirement from that position – it has mostly been deemed unnecessary. During a recent telephone call, I was very encouraged by Mike Ingram's enthusiasm and positive approach, so we are looking forward to getting together with him soon. Those of us who have been around a bit remember the bountiful few years we had when such releases were made in the western reaches!

*Gael Boucher*

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## PARADE OF THE WOODEN BOATS

**SUNDAY – 9 FEBRUARY 2003**

Registrations are now open for our annual Parade. Judging by the interest so far, it should be another great event. At least five new launches have been brought to Rotoiti this year – together with all sorts of other boats of various shapes and sizes. We have even heard of two steamers, built locally, which should be ready in time.

For those boaties with computers, a website – [www.woodenboatparade@xtra.co.nz](mailto:www.woodenboatparade@xtra.co.nz) – is being constructed. We would like to gradually build this to include all of our regular Parade attendees along with a colour picture and brief history. So if you want your precious craft listed, send a photo and story details to the Registrar. The webmaster is Eric Cameron of Te Akau Road. Many thanks to Eric for his patience and work on this large exercise. The website will also include a 'Boats for Sale' page – already several interesting craft are listed.

There will be some changes to the judging format this year. Because of the historical aspect of the Parade, part of the judging will include categories of

boats by age (ie those launched before 1920 – or 1940 and so on). This will really highlight some of the wonderful old boats our lake is becoming quite famous for. We know of three boats which are 100 years old!!

Entry forms will be mailed shortly – or you can find one on the website. The Parade will again assemble in the Okere arm. This does seem to be the best place being sheltered, and with good viewing by the increasing numbers of public who are able to park relatively easily off SH33.

So get the paint brushes out everyone and let's smarten up our Rotoiti 'fleet' for its big day of the year – and we are still open to any constructive suggestions about how to make the Parade better still. Contact either Lindsay Brighthouse (3624876), Phil Cunningham (3624070) or Registrar Brentleigh Bond (3624700). Entries and/or material for the website can be sent to Lake Rotoiti Wooden Boat Parade, PO Box 2008, Rotorua.

*Lindsay Brighthouse*

## RURAL TRANSFER STATIONS

The Okere Transfer Station officially opened on 12 August. An on-site meeting held between RDC and residents just prior to this identified concerns primarily with regard to opening hours (presently Wednesday and Sunday afternoons) and illegal dumping. RDC undertook to carry out adequate monitoring in the initial stages to identify any problems. They also agreed to hold further meetings with the community in November and March 2003 to discuss operational issues.

At the most recent meeting, RDC advised that they proposed to introduce a coin-operated chute to allow for bag disposal outside of opening hours. However, it would require a variation to the Resource Consent which requires rubbish to be collected by noon the next day. There is also an intention to re-position recycling facilities to provide continuous access.

It would seem that many people are still unaware of the changes to refuse facilities despite our attempts to inform all residents. RDC will send out further information with the next round of rates demands.

It is reported that the Transfer Station is now operating at about 50 percent capacity. Whilst there have been instances of mainly bags left outside the perimeter, illegal dumping overall has been less than anticipated. Extra rubbish tins will not be situated at boatramps for obvious reasons. Boaties are reminded that they should take all rubbish with them for disposal. All residents are urged to co-operate with the new regimes. Any teething problems will hopefully be resolved in the shortest possible time.

RDC's application to build a Transfer Station in Manawahe Road near the Waitangi Soda Springs was declined by both the Regional Council and District Council Commissioner on the grounds that there would be adverse environmental effects on the cultural values of the Springs.

RDC contend that they had included adequate controls to prevent any physical contamination of the Springs and that the Trustees of the land site had signed an agreement to the proposal. The matter is subject to an appeal by RDC to the Environment Court which they hope to settle without having to resort to a formal Hearing.

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## ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ECOLOGICAL CARE GROUP AT OKERE FALLS

Many people live at Okere because of the natural environment, especially the lake and its margins, natural areas, and water-based and terrestrial wildlife.

A summary of known ecological values is set out below:

- Water birds (e.g. dabchick, scaup, grey teal, shoveler, grey duck).
- Terrestrial birds - robin, whitehead, tui, bellbird, kereru, grey warbler.
- Lakeshore wetland vegetation.
- Terrestrial vegetation (e.g. Te Akau Scenic Reserve).
- Riverine ecosystem (Kaituna River).
- Rare plants (mistletoes).

To date there have been various unrelated and unco-ordinated initiatives to protect or enhance the environment, including local native plantings, a recent initiative to control wild ginger (led by Environment BOP), and local control of rats with a network of bait stations. There are many opportunities to enhance the natural environment at Okere, and an ecologically-focused care group could be one way to improve our community and to co-ordinate enhancement works.

A formal group has not been established but a network of bait stations has been set up around the lake margin and in the reserve at the end of the Te Akau Peninsula. Environment BOP has provided the bait stations and rat poison, and a meeting has been held with the Lake Rotoiti Scenic Reserves Board and the Department of Conservation, and they have both indicated support for the initiative (Environment BOP was also represented at this meeting).

A draft guiding philosophy for a care group is set out below:

- To establish an ecologically-focused care group at Okere Falls.
- To work collaboratively with the Okere community, relevant management agencies (e.g. Environment BOP, DOC), tangata whenua (e.g. Lake Rotoiti Scenic Reserve Board) to care for and enhance the natural environment at Okere Falls.
- To develop and implement a series of projects to protect and enhance indigenous biodiversity (native plants, habitats, and wildlife).

A suite of possible projects includes the following:

### Terrestrial Fauna

- To increase the numbers and diversity of terrestrial indigenous birds at Okere Falls (e.g. kereru, North Island robin).
- To establish and maintain a year-round rat control system on the lake margins of the Te Akau Peninsula.

- To establish a network of mustelid (stoat and ferret) traps.
- To maintain possum numbers at very low levels. There are currently very few possums on the Te Akau Peninsula and it would be reasonably easy to maintain and extend this situation.

### Terrestrial Vegetation

- To establish native plantings on roadsides; e.g. along the margins of Taheke Road near SH33, along Te Akau Road near the intersection with Okere Road.
- To eradicate wild ginger from the Te Akau Reserve, based on initial containment within a prescribed area and then progressive removal.
- To eradicate wild ginger from the Te Akau Peninsula within five (?) years.
- To eradicate wild ginger from the wider area of Okere Falls.
- To control other invasive pest plants (e.g. jasmine, ginger, yellow flag, tradescantia).
- To assist in the dissemination of information about the ecological risks posed by weeds, and the dumping of garden waste.

### Lake Margin Vegetation

- To establish and maintain a buffer of indigenous vegetation on the lake margin.
- To protect the lake margin and its biota.
- To remove willows from the lake margin.

### Public Use

- To maintain an area of open mown grass suitable for the public use of the reserve at the end of the Te Akau Peninsula.

### Community Involvement

- To organise work parties to undertake active ongoing work.

These are only preliminary ideas and the next stage is to organise a public meeting to discuss the project - this will probably happen in early 2003.

### Initial Contacts

Willie Shaw - Phone 362-4315 a/h; Fax 362-4546  
Carol Goodman - Phone/Fax 362-4517

## WEST ROTOITI VOLUNTEER FIRE UNIT

The Unit held its AGM on 10 November and, following the meeting, opened the recently relocated and extended fire station in Okere Road, next to the new RDC transfer station. The work on the building, construction of the hose tower, and preparation of the grounds was all funded and undertaken by the District Council, and we are very grateful for their substantial support and commitment to the Fire Unit and the West Rotoiti community. We owe a special vote of thanks to the RDC works committee and key Council staff, particularly engineer John Meredith and Sheryl Kirner.

The opening was a very special occasion, with about 100 people in attendance. The gathering was addressed briefly by Johnny James and Willie Shaw on behalf of the Fire Unit, and the building was then blessed by Rev. George Bennett and officially opened by Mayor Grahame Hall. Other special guests included Glenys Searancke (Councillor and Chairperson of the RDC Works Committee); Judy Keaney, Chairperson of the Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust (RECT); members of the Rotoiti 1B and Te Kai Ngahu Trusts; our patron Theo de Lange; representatives of the New Zealand Fire Service and other volunteer fire units in the

Rotorua area; and Cr Rosemary Michie from Environment BOP. Ron Taylor and crew also brought the Fletcher Challenge Forests rescue helicopter, which was a special bonus. The opening was followed by light refreshments and much animated discussion.

The Fire Unit has had a diverse range of 36 call outs since the last AGM, and the new fire engine (funded by RDC, RECT, and the National Rural Fire Authority) has received plenty of active duty. Every year brings a new suite of incidents and this year one-third of the call outs were motor vehicle crashes, with the balance made up of a house fire (1), river rescues (2), a kitchen fire (1), controlled burns (2), an oil spill (1), rubbish fires (2), car fires (2), scrub fires (2), trees across roads (2), a truck fire (1), flooding (1), power lines brought down in wind (1), and some false alarms or calls to monitored smoke alarms (6).

Take care with fire over the summer months. Please remember to get a permit if you wish to light an outside fire - these can be obtained from DOC or Fletcher Challenge Forests. Also remember to check and replace your smoke alarm batteries.

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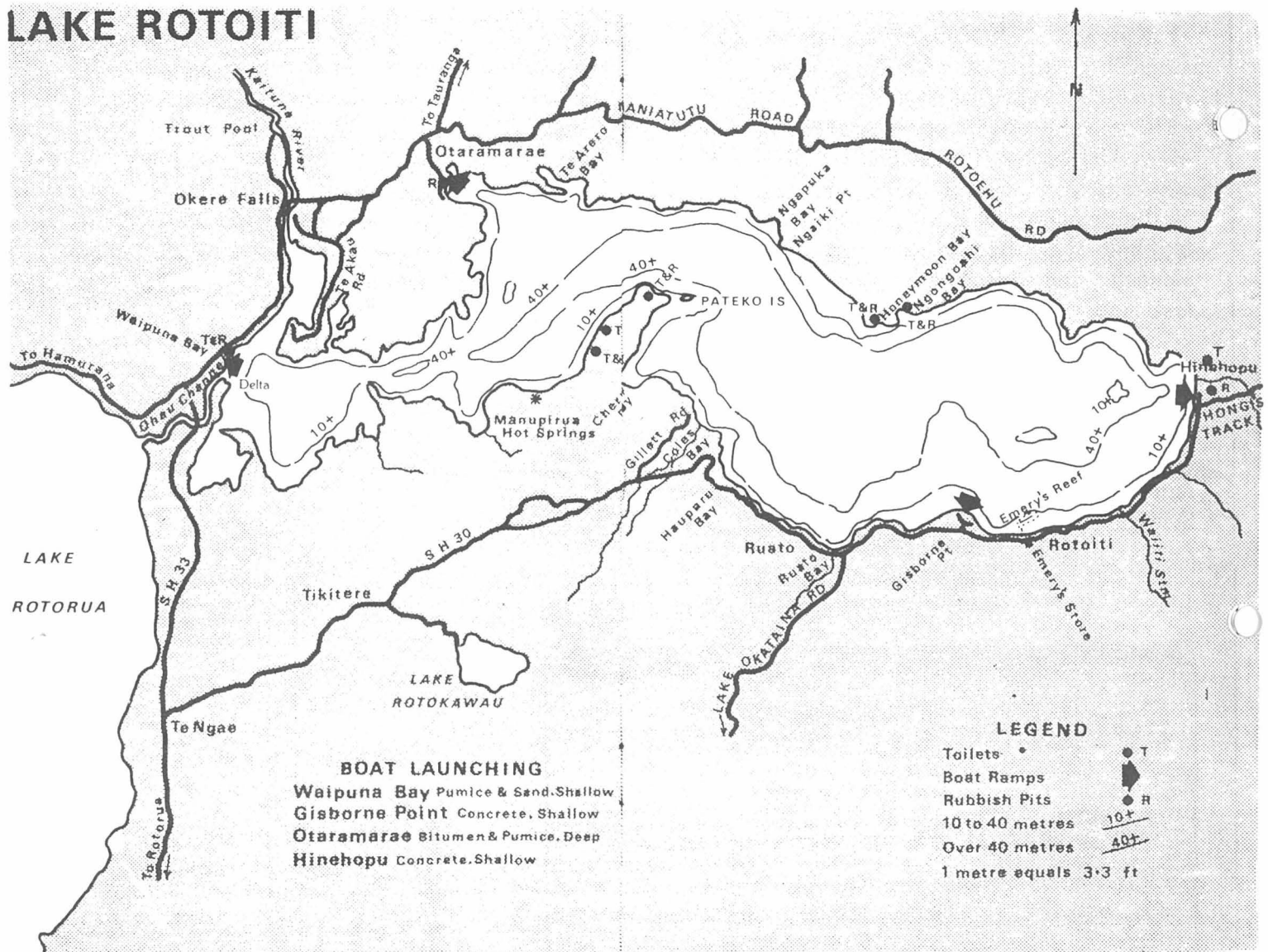
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