



Lake Rotoiti Ratepayers & Residents Association



Okere Arm - Whangamarino

Kia Ora Greetings from the Lake

With 2003 now entering its twilight zone, we reflect on what began as an environmental disaster of great magnitude and one which initially failed to attract the urgent response expected from local and central government agencies. During the course of the year, sustained pressure from the Rotoiti community and its representative organisations backed by some glaring and at times acrimonious nationwide publicity has provided the impetus to expedite important research and undertakings aimed towards immediate active remediation measures for Lake Rotoiti (and by implication Lake Rotorua).

Whilst some of the crunch decisions are still to come, a great deal of ground work has been completed. This has been complemented by some splendid public presentations sponsored primarily by the Lakes Water Quality Society to whom much is owed for the progress made to date. There has recently emerged some real evidence that most stakeholders have acknowledged the fundamental issues and have expressed a willingness to play their part in redressing them.

LRRRA will continue to put every effort into promoting and supporting initiatives which we believe will facilitate the desired outcomes for this and other important matters which may affect Rotoiti residents and ratepayers. Once again, grateful thanks to our advertisers, and of course all of our members whose support is essential in maintaining the status of this Association as a leading advocate for the community and the District. Best wishes to each and everyone for a joyous Christmas and prosperous New Year.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

With another year passing, it can be reported that, despite important progress regarding several key issues, there are still a number of significant decisions to be reached which will involve input from not only our communities but the whole District.

First and foremost concerns the much awaited Action Plan for addressing the water quality of Lakes Rotorua and Rotoiti. Just expediting the date of delivery for initial public consultation has been an arduous process for our lakes ratepayers and their representatives. The battle ahead may be even greater as resolutions are sought to determine the most economically sustainable methods of arresting and reducing nutrient inputs to these lakes.

That these decisions will not be easily reached perhaps goes without saying given the enormity of cost projections and inevitable economic impact on all stakeholder groups. Notwithstanding, most residents are seemingly united in the belief that it is absolutely essential for agreed action to commence swiftly to avert the likelihood of further environmental degradation. It will undoubtedly take a great deal of intuition, commitment and courage from all concerned to make things happen!

The implementation process for the Mourea/Okawa Bay sewerage scheme grinds on although Rotorua District Council are still planning for a completion date of April 2005 which is not too far removed from the original. A major change of heart has seen the local disposal site scrapped in favour of piping the effluent back to Rotorua city. More recently, a further milestone has been reached with a resolution to increase the size of the pipeline to accommodate the future inclusion of Okere, Otaramarae and Eastside expansion.

However, this latest proposal means that there are now much wider community implications so that further consultation will be required before finalising decisions. The Resource Consent application has been delayed accordingly although Council are proceeding with design phases and land negotiations.

Still to be resolved is the capital contribution which to date has been subject only to informal discussions with Council. We remain confident of an acceptable outcome.

Construction of the double lane on SH33 between Cooksons Road and Te Ngae Junction has recently been completed. West Rotoiti residents were interested to note the pipeline extension which accompanied the road works which allows Brunswick Park to access off-peak water from the eastern supply source as an extra-territorial (non guaranteed) supply. It should be noted that the extension has been paid for out of private development funds. However, it is believed that the Brunswick reservoir could have the potential to supply Mourea and possibly other areas in due course.

Not long after our May issue, the Gisborne Point walkway between Wharetoroa Drive and Emery's Store was completed. The eventual success in getting this facility constructed can be attributed in particular to the work and perseverance of Peter Carr-Smith and Bob Armstrong, along with all of those residents who supported the submissions which prompted Council action on the project. A further demonstration perhaps of the power of collective community action.

Late last year, Willie Shaw and Carol Goodman set out to establish an Ecological Care Group at Okere Falls with the intent of working alongside the community and relevant management agencies to care for and enhance the natural environment around Okere Falls. It was proposed to develop and implement a series of projects to meet these objectives. This year they were registered as a 'Care Group' by Environment BOP and were able to secure help from both EBOP and RDC who supplied materials and plants for the initial projects along Te Akau Road and the Kaituna margins. A number of residents provided voluntary labour and all involved are to be congratulated for this initiative. The benefits of such undertakings will be appreciated by most lake residents and we would encourage other communities around the lake to consider setting up similar groups.

From The Chairman - - - cont

Our attempts through the Draft Annual Plan process to have Environment BOP review the new rating regime for the Kaituna Catchment Control Scheme have been rejected. We believe that many Rotorua ratepayers including lakeside property owners are being disproportionately rated under the new classification system. Whilst we understood that the changes would be reviewed once the new LGA was promulgated, EBOP advise that submitters had the opportunity to appeal decisions within the statutory six-month period following the Special Order Hearings. However, further opportunity should arise at the Funding Review required by the new LGA.

Along with the Lakes Water Quality Society and local action groups, we have again taken every opportunity during the year to bring the concerns of the community to the attention of our local authorities and other bodies charged with managing the issues at hand. We are satisfied that this constant presence has brought about more expeditious progress than may have been the case otherwise.

It is with some regret that I wish to announce my retirement from the Association committee after 13 years, 10 as Chair. I have enjoyed the experience and challenges along with the opportunities to meet and work with the many wonderful people who share similar concerns for our community well-being. I am confident that I leave the Association in good heart. My sincere thanks to all who encouraged and supported me during this time. I will most certainly maintain a close interest in local affairs and continue to assist wherever possible.

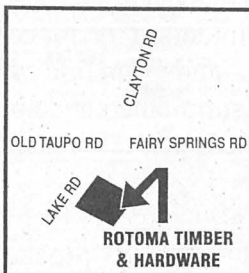
In closing, may I repeat that as with any organisation, it is desirable to have some fresh enthusiasm and new perspectives or ideas. Our committees have put in a lot of time and effort in the past but there comes the day when people for whatever reason need to move on and look to others to play a part. I believe that ratepayer groups are necessary and have a continuing role to play in promoting and guarding the interests of the community. Please consider giving some of your time to keeping our Association strong.

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MOUREA/OKAWA BAY SEWERAGE SCHEME

A Resource Consent Application for this scheme was notified on 5 September 2003. The Application included discharge of treated effluent to ground soakage via rapid infiltration at a site off SH33 near the top of the Mourea hill, construction and installation of a reticulation network, and routing the pipeline across the Ohau Channel (under the bed near the Lake Rotorua entrance and attached to the SH33 overbridge).

We forwarded a submission which clearly supported the Application in principle and in general terms. However, we noted that since the notification, Rotorua District Council had resolved (subject to meeting requirements within the Local Government Act) to reticulate the sewage back to the Rotorua Wastewater Plant, and that we were firmly in favour of this action for several reasons.

These included doubts over the long term hydraulic capacity of the local disposal site, possible difficulties over negotiated land tenure, and the probability of reticulation schemes for other Rotoiti communities in the not too distant future as well as the potential for reticulating properties and further expansion along the eastern route to the Airport.

We also requested that the area to be serviced include Hamurana Road properties (between Marama Point and the SH33 intersection) and those properties between the intersection and the Waipuna Delta since both areas contributed to lake nutrient loading and were considered to be part of the Mourea community. We also supported Ngati Te Takinga objections to installing part of the pipeline under the Channel bed on both cultural and safety grounds, the latter relating to possibilities of delayed detection and accidental discharge in the event of any pipeline fracture. Furthermore, re-routing the pipeline along Hamurana Road would allow these properties to be connected.

Soon after this, the Application was completely withdrawn. RDC determined that, having now resolved to take the effluent to the city, it was necessary to ensure that all requirements of the new Local Government Act (particularly Section 76) had been met before lodging the new Application. Section 76 primarily deals with legislative requirements and community views in relation to Decisions made by Local Government Bodies. As part of this process, RDC resolved to provide a comprehensive study of the eastern

catchment area of Mourea/Okawa Bay, Okere and surrounding districts within their Growth Strategy Report to facilitate decisions regarding sewerage options.

Latest Council Works Reports just received detail the extent of the work done by Harrison Grierson Consultants in developing the options to date. Included is the now preferred 'Ultimate Catchment Development' model which provides for connection of Okere Falls, Otaramarae and the developed and undeveloped areas (land up to the 340 metre contour) between Mourea and the Airport. To accommodate this option, the pipeline size would need to increase to 250-300mm diameter. It was concluded that this proposal had merit in providing for a wider community and could also provide significant benefits to lake water quality.

Noting that there would be significant land use planning and cost implications which would affect a large number of persons beyond Mourea and Okawa Bay, Council considered that the proposal should clearly not proceed until wider community views had been obtained. It was suggested therefore that public consultation should begin forthwith. Technical aspects such as route definition and Transit's requirements could still proceed. The preliminary estimated Net Present Value Cost of this proposal (conveyance from Mourea terminal pump station to the urban system *including downstream upgrades from the Airport inwards but not including the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade*) is \$7.3 million.

Notwithstanding this, Council is continuing with the Mourea/Okawa Bay scheme. Detail design of the local reticulation system is almost complete (some changes are expected to be necessary following private property consent negotiations) and design for the Parua area is proceeding. Concept design of the pipeline connecting Mourea to the urban wastewater system is also near completion. Council's intention is to construct the reticulation system and pipeline as two separate contracts with a simultaneous completion date sometime in April 2005.

STOP PRESS: At the full Council Meeting of 2 December 2003, it was resolved to proceed with the 250/300mm pipeline and to commence with further consultation of the community in accordance with the Local Government Act Section 78.

LAKE WATER QUALITY - UPDATE

Since our last Newsletter a great deal more information on contributory factors to Rotorua's lake water quality problems, along with possible solutions, has been gathered. And all of the major participants (including the Ministry for the Environment) have now indicated their commitment to co-operate and help resolve the issues at hand.

Much of this progress from our own viewpoint can be attributed to the ongoing efforts of the Lakes Water Quality Society which has relentlessly pursued every avenue available in seeking acknowledgement of the urgency needed for action. Those of you who are also LWQS members would have received their latest mailout outlining the main features of the third Symposium held during October. Revelations that increasing phosphorus inputs should be regarded as an even greater concern than those of nitrogen came to the fore, as well as presentations on farming perspectives and initiatives, Environment Waikato's work towards saving Lake Taupo, and a NIWA warning that proposals to divert the outflow of the Ohau Channel away from the main body of Lake Rotoiti, whilst helping to reduce nutrient inputs, could have dire consequences in terms of also restricting the amount of life-giving oxygen injected from this source.

The Rotorua Lakes Strategy Joint Committee (consisting of EBOP, RDC and Te Arawa with EBOP's Paul Dell appointed as Lakes Project Co-ordinator) is now up and running and produced its first public Newsletter regarding the Lake Rotorua/Rotoiti Action Plan in September. This

detailed the latest research and investigation being undertaken by various agencies towards identifying options to protect and restore lake water quality in these lakes (those of our members who have sent in suggestions should note that these have been forwarded to EBOP for consideration).

It is anticipated that the Draft Working Documents will be available by the end of this month (December) and that a public meeting will be convened in late January 2004 as part of establishing the Community Working Party (consisting of representatives from all stakeholder groups including ratepayers).

In addition, the Newsletter outlined undertakings by the Ministry for the Environment to address Rotorua's problems (at last!). Inclusion of the Rotorua lakes by the Government Working Group on the Water Programme of Action, contracting an expert in managing degraded lakes to advise and assist EBOP (Australian expert Barry Hamilton has already been appointed), and discussing options for Government's Sustainable Management Fund to support a community programme of action (as has been done with Taupo) form the main thrust of their involvement.

All of this provides optimism for the future of our lakes. However the hard decisions have yet to be made and we should be under no delusions that they will be made easily. A tremendous amount of concession and goodwill is going to be required by all sectors of the community if we are to reach anywhere near optimum outcomes for the Rotorua/Rotoiti catchment. Without a doubt, it will be well worth the effort.

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REVENUE AND FINANCING REVIEW

We became aware earlier in the year that latest Government legislation requires Councils to undertake a review of Revenue and Financing Policy (replaces the term Funding Policy). During this year's RDC Draft Annual Plan Hearings, a strong lobby from the business and commercial sector expressed concern over impending rate increases as a result of recent changes to Government policy. Accordingly, they sought to have the Box Differentials amended in their favour. LRRRA in its submission opposed any changes until a full consultative review had taken place. In the event, this was upheld and a comprehensive review is currently taking place.

All submitters to the DAP have been invited to participate and we most certainly intend to have our views heard. Since the DAP Hearings, facts have emerged which refute some of the commercial sector's claims. Nonetheless there may well be valid grievances which need to be addressed. Likewise, the farming community are also seeking further rating relief.

Any decision to reduce rates for these groups would obviate the necessity to increase residential rates. Furthermore, it is understood that some Councillors are again questioning the ongoing relevancy of the urban/rural differential (this currently provides for rural residential properties to pay 60 % of the urban general rate). So it is clearly important that we all take a very keen interest in current proceedings.

Many of us vividly remember our monumental challenge to RDC when they last attempted to dismantle the rural differential in 1991. On that occasion, we accepted what may have been a fair compromise which saw the rate set at 51.5% (which incidentally was based on the difference between the rural and urban *average* land value prevailing at that time). As a result of that event, we also gained a clear understanding that future proposals involving rating policy would be subject to prior public consultation.

We were therefore more than a little miffed that we received no such consideration when the 1999 review ultimately changed the differential to 60%. All of the major Lakes Ratepayer Associations registered strong protests listing numerous valid reasons as to why no justification existed for change at that time – to no avail. We remarked that this could be seen as an insidious creep towards setting parity with the urban sector.

There are of course many arguments - and a certain amount of subjectivity - in trying to reach fair decisions in setting rates across the board and most of us are willing to debate the issues on an equal footing, and with an open mind. But we do insist on being given the opportunity. It is simply not acceptable to be shut out of the debate! Which is why we are currently maintaining a close liaison with RDC to ensure that we receive due consultation. And it would be wise for all of our ratepayers to remain alert whilst this review is progressing, and be prepared to have your say if it is seen to be heading towards inequitable conclusions. We will certainly endeavour to keep you posted when matters of significance emerge.

It should be noted that most objections to the 1991 increase were based around the fact that rural communities benefited from few services, were a considerable distance from urban amenities, and received far less than a proportionate share of the annual budget. In 1999, we argued that there was no evidence to suggest that the level of improvements since undertaken in our communities equated to more than a fair and equitable share of available resources.

It is being suggested by some that the majority of rural residential properties are of sufficiently close proximity to the urban area to readily access services provided by Council. Surely our communities are no closer to these amenities than they were 12 years ago. Public transport services remain scant. Rural facilities are ever diminishing and the cost of travel to access employment, education, shopping, organised recreation and essential services is more burdensome.

Furthermore, claims that land valuations in rural areas are lower than urban are unsubstantiated in fact. In 1999, the averages for residential land were \$42,000 for urban properties and \$88,500 for rural properties. Moreover, the average for lakeside properties is much higher as a result of the 'Mass Appraisal Valuation' methods now used in the triennial re-valuations. These higher land values most certainly do not indicate a generally greater ability to pay rates compared with owners of otherwise similar urban properties.

There are many reasons why the differential should not increase and it is intended that these should be fully explored as part of this review!

ATTENTION ALL RESIDENTS

YOUR COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

Current Chairman, Jim Stanton, is retiring from the LRRRA Committee at the end of this term having served 13 years, 10 as Chairman. Jim has a tremendous love of Lake Rotoiti and his contribution to the community has been outstanding. On behalf of Rotoiti ratepayers, I thank Jim very much for all of his work. It has been greatly appreciated.

Richard Wilson

The Lake Rotoiti Ratepayers & Residents Association in 2004 and beyond is faced with some extremely important issues, lakes restoration and rating reviews to name but two. The Association needs to remain strong to tackle these and other matters of concern to our community.

The committee is in vital need of new blood! If you have an interest in lake affairs, can attend 9 – 10 meetings a year and help with the running of the committee, we urge you to attend our next Annual General Meeting or submit your name for nomination. If unable to attend the AGM, nominations (signed by the nominee) should be in the hands of the Secretary 7 days prior to the meeting.

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 11 January 2004

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 the meeting

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF LAKE ROTOITI RATEPAYERS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION HELD AT PIKIAO RUGBY LEAGUE CLUBROOMS ON SUNDAY 12 JANUARY 2003

PRESENT: Jim Stanton (Chairman), Richard Wilson (Secretary), Peter Carr-Smith, Laurence Tamati (committee), Grahame Hall (Mayor, Rotorua), Cr Bob Martin, Cr Charles Sturt (RDC), Cr Rosemary Michie, Cr Robin Ford (EBOP), Paul Dell (EBOP), and approximately 13 residents and ratepayers.

APOLOGIES: Sandy Hall (Mayoress, Rotorua), John Cronin (Chairman, EBOP), Steve Chadwick (MP Rotorua), Cr Bill Cleghorn (EBOP), Andrew Lang (RDC Harbourmaster), Gael Boucher, Theo and Marjorie De Lange, Jo and Clive Martin, Derek and Margaret Jones, Tai Eru, Hilma Gill, Bill Kingi, Nick Miller, Fred Whata, Anne Sinclair, Ivan and Val Thomson, Judy and John Rewi.

*Michael Gill / Brentleigh Bond
Carried*

1. **OPENING.** The Chairman welcomed those present and thanked the invited guests for their attendance.
2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM.** Held at the Pikiao Rugby League Clubrooms on 13 January 2002 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

*Richard Wilson / Bob Armstrong
Carried*

3. **MATTERS ARISING.**

- a. **Mourea Water Supply.** It was noted that no further progress has been made on this issue. Mary Stanton spoke about large areas of Mourea urgently needing a water supply. Options were being assessed for these people including a privately sourced supply. Michael Gill believed RDC had done everything possible to establish a reticulated supply in the area but when the facts and costings were presented, the support base was considered insufficient to proceed.
- b. **Parade of Wooden Boats.** Lindsay Brighthouse outlined the programme for this year's parade on 9 February 2003. Lindsay advised that the surplus from previous parades had been used to construct picnic tables at Honeymoon Bay, Cherry Bay and Picnic Point.
- c. **Gisborne Point Footpath.** RDC Finance has now been approved for a walkway from Wharetoroa Drive to Emery's Store. This is scheduled for completion by Easter 2003.
- d. **Mourea / Okawa Bay Sewerage Scheme.** The Chairman congratulated the Okawa Bay Action Group and Lakes Water Quality Society for their strong efforts towards promoting the case for a reticulated scheme in this area. RDC are presently preparing the Resource Consent Application. The issue of capital contribution is still to be discussed with the community to enable an equitable funding solution to be found.
- e. **Ohau Channel.** Concerns expressed at the last meeting had been investigated. EBOP have advised that the Channel is regularly monitored for water quality which overall is pretty good. Sedimentation problems are primarily caused by flows from Lake Rotorua.

- f. **Okere Falls Issues.** Fred Whata has been in consultation with Kevin Thompson (RDC SH Engineer) regarding the issues of willows along the lake margins creating a traffic hazard and the unsealed road reserve along part of SH33 causing a dust nuisance. Solutions are awaiting financial allocation.

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

*Jim Stanton / Richard Wilson
Carried*

5. **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 2003 remain at \$10 per resident /ratepayer family.

*Jim Stanton / Robin Sinclair
Carried*

- b. **Election of Auditor.** Ivan Thomson of Te Akau Road has again agreed to the appointment of Honorary Auditor for 2003. A letter of appreciation would be sent to Ivan for his services.

*Jim Stanton / Richard Wilson
Carried*

- c. **Donations to Lake Rotoiti Community Projects.** Lindsay Brighouse spoke of the healthy level of accumulated funds and proposed a motion 'that the incoming committee actively pursue worthy projects within our community to dispose of up to \$6,000 of Association funds.' Peter Carr-Smith and Richard Wilson spoke in support of the motion. Mary Stanton and Michael Gill opposed the motion. They spoke of the 'blood, sweat and tears' which had gone into raising the funds and noted that until now there had been a general consensus that accumulated funds should not be distributed but retained for use in times of crisis. The motion was passed on a show of hands 8-5.

*Lindsay Brighouse / Peter Carr-Smith
Carried*

- d. **Christmas Function.** Michael Gill proposed a motion that LRRRA funds not be used for the purpose of Association end-of-year Christmas functions. Following discussion, the motion lapsed for want of a seconder.

6. **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE.** The following were elected to the executive committee for 2003 in accordance with accepted procedures:

Jim Stanton (Okawa Bay), Nick Miller (Okere Falls), Fred Whata (Okere Falls), Tai Eru (Otaramarae), Donald Calder (Mourea), Richard Wilson (Otaramarae), Peter Carr-Smith (Gisborne Point), Bill Kingi (Parcliff), Laurence Tamati (Lynmore).

*Tai Eru Morehu / Keith Smith
Carried*

7. **GUEST SPEAKERS.** Mayor Grahame Hall and Paul Dell (EBOP) accepted invitations to address the meeting on matters related to their particular sphere of office. Subjects discussed and debated included:

- 50% purchase of airport.
- Upgrade of wastewater plant and granting of 20 year Resource Consent.
- Okere Falls Refuse Station and Fire Station.
- Appointment of new RDC CEO, Peter Guerin.

- New Local Government Act.
- New Rating Powers Act.
- Ratepayers 73% approval of Council and staff.
- Interim review of Long Term Financial Strategy.
- Acknowledgement of work of EBOP Councillors and LRRRA Association.
- Lakes and rivers management, water quality and lake margins.
- State of Environment reporting.
- Lakes Symposium 2003.
- Lakes Chair at Waikato University.

GENERAL BUSINESS

8. **Maritime Safety Act.** Lindsay Brighthouse expressed concern over the changes in the Act regarding the calling of 111 for any breakdowns on the lake. Others expressed concern that the new laws coming into effect 1 February 2003 will affect lake enforcement and that all commercial vessels must be surveyed and operated by a licensed skipper. These matters would be further investigated in seeking clarification and satisfactory outcomes.
9. **Okere Falls Rural Refuse Station.** There remained widespread concern regarding the opening hours of the Transfer Station. Many considered that the hours were insufficient to meet the communities needs. Dumping of rubbish was reported in Maniatutu Road, Whangamoa Drive, and outside the Transfer Station itself. Mayor Hall acknowledged that problems existed but that solutions would come down to cost and who should pay.

Lindsay Brighthouse queried the costs of running the Station. Advice was given that these amounted to \$82.41 per hour or \$288.00 per 3 ½ hour day (on-site attendance, cleaning, removal of skips, administration and recycling). Each extra half day (3 ½ hours) would cost in the region of \$15,000 per annum. Richard Wilson said that this seemed a small price to pay for keeping the community clean.

A motion was proposed 'that residents have found the short opening times of the Transfer Station unsatisfactory and that opening for a further two half-days per week is necessary to ensure that the facility is fully utilised.'

*Lindsay Brighthouse / Ted Thorne
Carried*

10. **Lakes Water Quality.** Many spoke of the poor water quality of the lake and the urgency required for RDC and EBOP to 'stop passing the buck' and get on with the job of cleaning up. Ian McLean said the lake had seen nothing from all the talk so far and continued to deteriorate. Richard Wilson queried the RDC Lakes Management Strategy Report which differed from EBOP's figures. Mayor Hall replied that the figures had been altered as a result of concerns over the effect on tourism. Bob Armstrong and Don Atkinson registered strong disapproval over this sort of misrepresentation.
11. **Lake Rotoiti Lake Level.** Michael Gill provided an update on the management of Rotoiti's lake levels from a local point of view. EBOP have now installed a telemetering gauge at the Okawa bay marina which is proving far more accurate and reliable than NIWA's facility at Okere. The control of the semi-automated gates at Okere Falls from Whakatane is proving to be very satisfactory. It was suggested that EBOP need to improve their maintenance schedules for the gates following the considerable time taken to fix a recently broken control rope.
12. **CLOSURE.** There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.25pm.

NB: These minutes will be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting to be held Sunday 11 January 2004. The Financial Report and Audited Accounts will be available at this meeting.

More on Lake Water Quality

Following are some of the direct intervention options being considered by Environment BOP as ways to improve lake water quality more quickly.

Phosphorus Precipitation. A trial was planned for November to treat Lake Okaro with alum, a chemical that will absorb phosphorus from the water. It is hoped this will reduce blue-green algal blooms in summer. If the same method was used on the Hamurana Stream, which has a high phosphorus content, it could remove a tenth of the phosphorus going into the lake.

Treatment Wall. Below-the-ground treatment walls intercept nutrient-laden groundwater and take out the nitrogen. They could be used to treat shallow groundwater that has an elevated nitrate-nitrogen content.

Oxygenation. This involves injecting a lake's bottom waters with oxygen. It is an option that will be studied in the Action Plan for Lake Rotoiti

which gets underway next year. This option would be considered as part of a package in combination with any stream diversion.

Stream Diversion. Water from Lake Rotorua flows through the Ohau Channel into Lake Rotoiti, bringing with it a lot of nutrients in the under-current. A barrier could divert that under-current towards Okere Falls and into the Kaituna River. Investigations are being made to find out what effect a diversion like this would have on the ecology of eastern Lake Rotoiti.

Hypolimnetic Discharge. Lake Okareka currently discharges through pipes set just below the surface into Lake Tarawera. If the pipes instead took water from the bottom of the lake, they might 'catch' the nutrients being released from the sediments, which would remove a significant amount of phosphorus. This was also proposed for Lake Rotoiti but it was determined that the engineering would make it too difficult.

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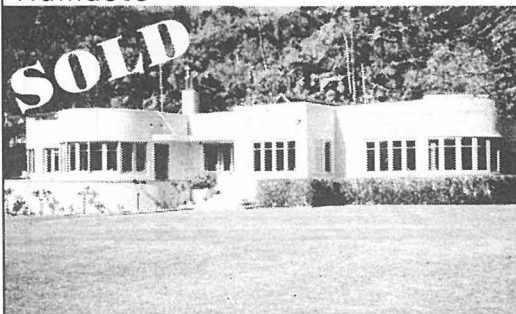
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Lake Water Quality – A Radical Approach

I believe that Lake Lucerne in Switzerland may have had a similar (lake water quality) problem. On seeing the great jet of water that they shoot hundreds of feet into the air, I originally thought that they were providing a spectacle for visitors to the town. I now understand that the purpose of the jet is to re-oxygenate the polluted waters of the lake and that the pump is driven by electricity generated by water flowing from the lake itself.

Conceptually, we could run a large pipe (say 1 metre in diameter) from the deepest part of Lake Rotoiti to the foot of the Okere Falls where the power station used to be. Without ongoing cost, gravity would siphon badly de-oxygenated water from the depths of the lake to be re-oxygenated as it flowed down the Kaituna River.

Again conceptually, at the end of this pipe, at the foot of the Okere Falls, could be a small turbine which would provide electricity to power a jet, as used at

Lake Lucerne, to make a further contribution to re-oxygenating the waters of the lake. When the lake waters were not at risk, the electricity from the turbine could be sold into the national grid to help pay for the scheme.

Such a scheme would not be cheap and would not obviate the need to take all other steps that are being taken to reduce pollution of the lake waters.

At present the best of the lake's oxygen charged surface waters flow constantly over the Okere Falls. The constant flow (at no ongoing cost) of a reasonable amount of the de-oxygenated water that we want to get rid of would help to save the dying lake.

These ideas should not be treated as altogether too far-fetched. The problem is a very real one and anything that could help should be considered.

Thanks for the contribution Lincoln – it has been passed on to EBOP for appraisal.

West Rotoiti Volunteer Fire Force

The Annual General Meeting was held on 19 October 2003 with a reasonable attendance. Officers elected remain the same as last year.

We have settled into our re-sited and revamped Fire Station and have been kept busy with 37 callouts over the past 12 months. Special thanks must go to the Rotorua District Council, committee members and the community for their continued support which has enabled us to complete the refurbishment of the new Fire Station. We now have a wonderful facility available to the community for hire at a cost of \$20.00 per function.

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE once again and any donations will be much appreciated.

CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS:

John James [Chairman] - 3624124

Dan Arrowsmith [Training] - 3624477

Keith Smith [Secretary] - 3624178

Carol Goodman [Treasurer] - 3624517

West Rotoiti Volunteer Fire Force

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☐ Tick if receipt required

REFUSE DISPOSAL UPDATE

There is an ongoing problem in the West Rotoiti area with the collection of refuse bags. Unfortunately, the actions of a few are causing our neighbourhood to look like a Tip! Remember that rubbish bag collection day is **MONDAY** - always - so please put your Rotorua District Council Official Bag out on Sunday or Monday only. If you are leaving the lake before these days, you are encouraged to make alternative arrangements such as asking a neighbour to put it out for you. Ensure that the bag is well secured with food scraps ideally placed in plastic bags. As everyone knows, the health of our lake is precarious enough without adding to its woes.

Whilst some remain concerned that opening hours at the Okere Transfer Station do not always suit their needs, usage has continued to be fairly constant at around 50 – 75% capacity on the days that it is open. Reports of indiscriminate dumping do not appear to have increased at this stage and we would all be hopeful that longer term acceptance of the new regime will reduce this problem further. RDC will be sending out magnetic information tablets with the next round of rates notices. East Rotoiti residents will be interested to know that RDC are currently preparing a Resource Consent application to establish a Transfer Station at the location of the present skip site near Hinehopu.

RDC have recently sent out a warning that used hypodermic needles/sharps have been found in rubbish dumped on the ground and in the skips at the Hinehopu skip site by Waste Management drivers on more than one occasion. Residents should be aware that this sort of product can be a danger to public health. It is of course illegal to dispose of such items in other than a controlled environment. Following is a summary of Rotorua District Council's Recycling and Refuse Disposal Information.

WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD REFUSE COLLECTION

- * Only RDC Official Bags will be collected.
- * Place at kerbside by 8.00am on collection day.
- * Tie bags securely.
- * *No changes to collection days on Public Holidays.*

REFUSE & RECYCLING AT OKERE TRANSFER STATION

- * Located at Okere Road (just south of SH33).
- * Hours are: 1.00pm – 4.00pm Wednesdays.
10.00am – 4.30pm Sundays.
1.00pm – 4.30pm Last afternoon of a Public Holiday.
- * **Landfill Fees will apply. Recycling Free of Charge.**
- Please note:** No hazardous wastes i.e. oils, chemicals, refrigeration Units, car bodies etc accepted at Transfer Stations.
Commercial and Out-of-District refuse prohibited.

ROTORUA LANDFILL

- * Located off Atiamuri Highway SH30 1.6km From Waipa Junction.
- * **Hours:** Open to the public between the hours of:

7.30am – 4.30pm
Monday - Saturday.

9.30am - 4.30pm
Sunday and Public Holidays.

Closed Christmas Day.
- * **Landfill Fees apply.**

OKERE FALLS ECOLOGICAL CARE GROUP

The Okere Falls Ecological Care Group has been established and registered as a 'Care Group' with Environment Bay of Plenty.

The Care Group works collaboratively with the Okere community, Environment BOP, DOC, RDC and Tangata Whenua to care for and enhance the natural environment at Okere Falls through a series of projects designed to protect and enhance indigenous native plants, habitat and wildlife.

Recently, a series of restoration plantings have been started at the entrance to Te Akau Road, and the Kaituna lake margins in the region of the old shop, jetty and the weir. The site preparations and plantings are scheduled for 2003/04, with ongoing maintenance such as weed and pest control for a further three years.

So far, two areas of Te Akau Road have been prepared and planted, with a further area prepared for planting next autumn. The Kaituna lake edge is to be cleared during November and, following some weed control over summer, will also be planted in the autumn.

Environment BOP has provided the plants and weed killer whilst RDC has helped with some site preparation and additional plants.

The planting and care plans have been prepared by Wildland Consultants. The Care Group itself organised community work parties through flyers placed in letterboxes of local residents. The response has been very encouraging with about 12 - 14 people turning up for working bees.

Besides fostering community spirit, the potential benefits for Lake Rotoiti to be derived from this type of environmental restoration and enhancement are considerable. We would certainly like to encourage other communities around the lake to establish similar Care Groups.

Further information and advice can be obtained from :

Sally Brock	Ph 362 4764
Willie Shaw	Ph 362 4546
Carol Goodman	Ph 362 4512

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P.O. BOX 495 ROTORUA**



Okere Care Group - Working Volunteers

West Rotoiti Action Group – (WRAG)

WRAG was formed in February 2003 by Richard Wilson (Otaramarae), Nick Miller and Sally Brock (both Okere Falls). We were greatly concerned about the rapid deterioration of Lake Rotoiti and that many people relied upon its unsafe water for their domestic supplies, and so we decided to do something about it.

A letter was circulated to all Okere and Otaramarae ratepayers inviting them to a meeting to discuss support for a community water supply and sewerage scheme. We also invited donations to defray administration costs and this resulted in \$1,965.00 being forwarded for which we thank all of those who responded most sincerely.

The meeting was held on 19 April 2003 and was attended by 91 ratepayers. There was unanimous support for projects aimed at cleaning up Lake Rotoiti. Two motions were put to the meeting:

1. That Rotorua District Council (RDC) should proceed immediately with a community sewerage reticulation scheme for the area designed to remove nutrients and contamination by septic tanks from the Lake Rotoiti catchment.
2. That RDC should proceed with a community water supply for West Rotoiti, its boundaries to be determined.

There was overwhelming support for these proposals and a committee was elected comprising John Green, Sally Brock, Nick Miller, Bob Smith and Richard Wilson.

Following this, a letter entitled 'Your Lake Needs You' was sent to all Rotoiti ratepayers inviting the various communities to set up similar groups. A further letter was sent to 368 Okere and Otaramarae ratepayers requesting formal support for a submission to RDC's Draft Annual Plan. 220 replies were received with results being:

	<u>Sewerage</u>	<u>Water</u>
For	211	159
Against	6	38
Undecided	3	23

On the basis of this, WRAG made written submissions to both Environment Bay of Plenty (EBOP) and RDC Draft Annual Plans requesting that they undertake immediate action towards saving Lake Rotoiti. In addition, we requested RDC to proceed immediately with a sewerage reticulation scheme for Okere and Otaramarae, and a water supply for West Rotoiti. EBOP's response suggested that all haste was being made towards putting in place an Action Plan for Lakes Rotorua and Rotoiti. RDC's responses to our submissions were:

Sewerage Scheme. A preliminary report has been prepared which will be further developed with input from local communities. It is presently not possible to advance the estimated \$5 million increase needed for such a scheme without going through a full consultation process. Costs allocated for the design of the scheme have been scheduled for inclusion in the 2004/05 year.

Water Supply. Initial work on a supply for West Rotoiti was carried out some 12 years ago. At that stage, there was no widespread public support and at present there is insufficient public support to proceed with a scheme for Mourea/Okawa Bay. A comprehensive review of water reticulation including public consultation will be undertaken within existing budgets.

WRAG has been well represented by Sally, Richard and Nick at the many Meetings (and Hearings) since held in regard to lakes restoration. We also wish to thank Brentleigh Bond, Ian McLean and Jim Stanton for their advice, encouragement, help and patience.

Some good news to hand is that RDC has recently decided to pipe the sewerage from Mourea/Okawa Bay to the Rotorua Wastewater Disposal site instead of local disposal as originally intended (more about this elsewhere).

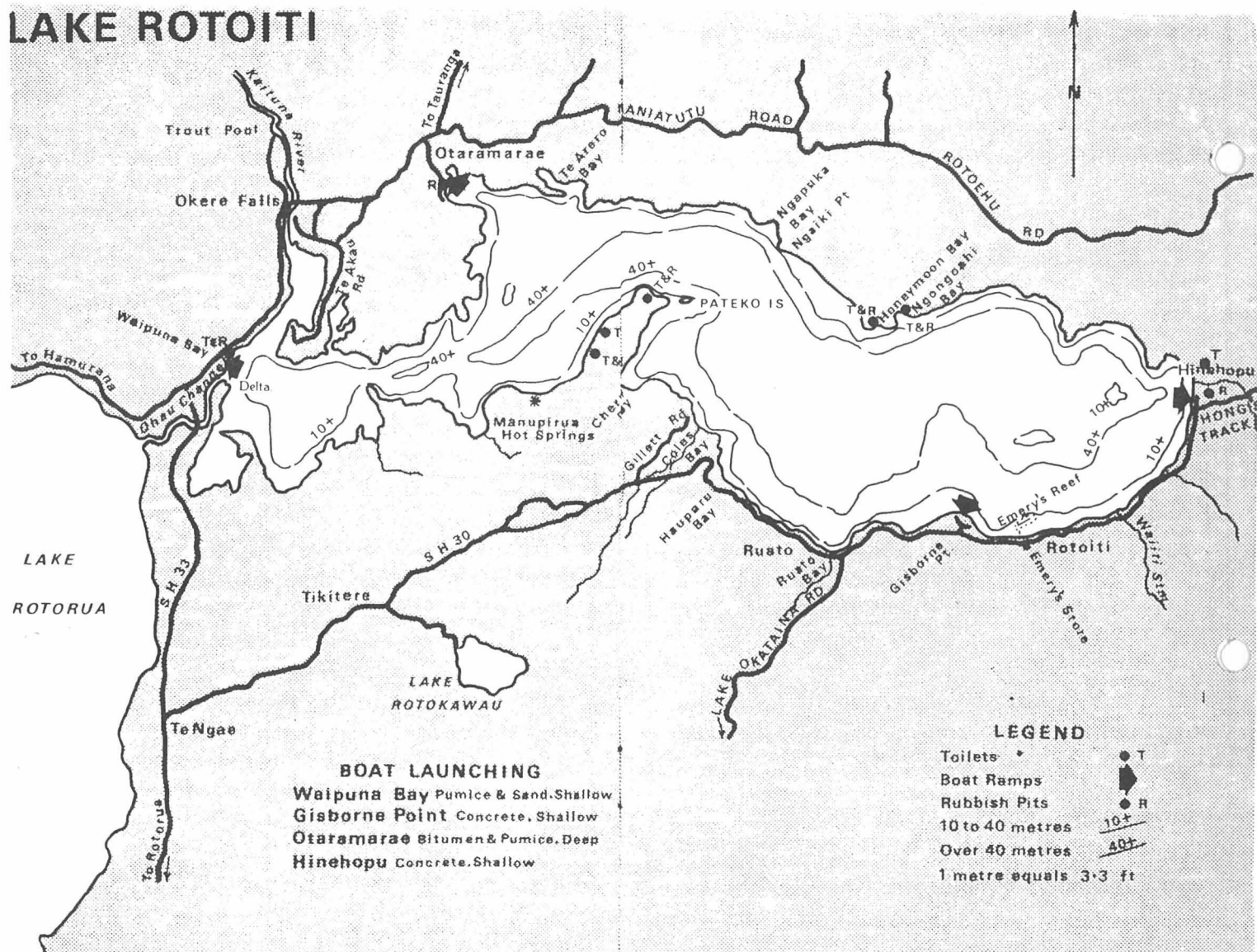
Our AGM is to be held on Easter Saturday (10 April 2004) at 9.30am at the Fire Station. Apologies or enquiries to Richard Wilson (Phone 362 4308 or Fax 362 4968).

Note: WRAG is affiliated to the Lake Rotoiti Ratepayers & Residents Association.

2003 COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN/TREASURER	Jim Stanton	Okawa Bay, Mourea	Ph (07) 362 4690
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN	Fred Whata	Okere Falls	Ph (07) 362 4842
SECRETARY	Richard Wilson	Otaramarae	Ph (07) 362 4308
COMMITT	Tai Eru-Morehu	Maniatutu Road	Ph (07) 362 4392
	Bill Kingi	Parcliffe	Ph (07) 345 7186
	Nick Miller	Te Akau Road	Ph (07) 362 4747
	Laurence Tamati	Mourea	Ph (07) 345 6735

LAKE ROTOIITI



IMPORTANT & USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Fire, Police, Ambulance,
Search and Rescue 111
Accident and Emergency
medical care centre 348 1000
Urgent Pharmacy 348 4385
ROTORUA HOSPITAL 348 1199
Poison Information (03) 474 7000

USEFUL INFORMATION

Dog control - Rotorua
 District Council 348 4199
 Environmental pollution
 hotline 0800 738 393
 Lakes Inspector
 Andrew Lang 348 4199
 SPCA 349 2955

Police Station Rotorua 348 0099

TrustPower emergency number
 0800 878 787

*Rubbish bags are collected on
 Monday mornings*