

Council

**Wednesday, 25 February 2004
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

**This Report is Respectfully Dedicated
to the Memory of Alf Roke**



11 March 1904 - 10 February 2004

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
TO BE HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, 6 WAIPAREIRA AVENUE, LINCOLN,
WAITAKERE CITY, ON WEDNESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2004,
COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM.**

PART B - REPORT OF THE MAYOR

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF WAITAKERE

The Eco City Vision

It has now been more than a decade since Waitakere City began pursuing the Eco City strategy. And so it was timely that staff gathered, last week, at Ceramco Park for “eco-experience workshops”. The two workshops were designed to promote the Eco City strategic direction throughout our organisation, and to focus staff on what this direction means for the way they carry out their day-to-day roles. As Mayor I have taken this as my cue to consider herein where the Eco City vision has taken Waitakere City Council thus far and where it might take us in the future.

The Past and the Present

In the past ten years we have established the first Eco City in the world. We have protected our natural resources, cleaned up the waterways, removed graffiti. There was a time at Piha when you couldn't even buy a decent pie. Today Pete Chapman has the best coffee in Auckland, and a bakery to go with it. From the Nikau Club high in the ranges to Livingstones at Whenuapai, the Long Drop in Titirangi an Acacia in New Lynn our city offers some great dining.

What has gone is a feeling of being in the wrong place. Westies today have pride and a belief in themselves. They live in a city of dynamic energy that can hold its head up anywhere. Where there was once violence there is now comparative safety. Where there was once rubbish and graffiti there is now a clean, green environment.

Our community is a caring one. That's why Howard Morrison and Westfield decided to launch the current Niue Cyclone appeal in our city. As Sir Howard told me: “It just seemed the right thing to do it in the West. The people here are responsive on issues and community life”.

The Council is in partnership with the builders and owners of the Trusts Stadium to create one of the best sports and events facilities in the country. We are building new libraries and the magnificent Waitakere Central that will transform the commercial heart of our city forever.

We have some wonderful new bridges and public art. And although progress at Hobsonville has been slow we are still producing some amazing super yachts. And some world-beating film and television. I cheered last week when Peter Jackson announced, at the Bafta Awards, that 25,000 people had been employed on Lord of Rings. I cheered because I imagined the many in our city who would work on the recently confirmed position of The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.

Our skill has been to show how effective environmental management can help create a better city. It must have been strange for many when we advocated that peace was not about nuclear weaponry, but about slowing down streets, reducing crimes, and creating jobs. But we did it.

The creation of the Eco City has been a tough journey. For more than a decade Waitakere has taken the lead in environmental planning and sustainability. We pushed boundaries at a time when New Zealand was just waking up to the importance of environmental issues. But now these are mainstream. What was edgy in the early 90s has become conventional.



The Future

The next challenge, I believe, is to develop a greater balance of environmental, social and economic agendas, to create a city that is not only environmentally aware but also economically vigorous and socially equitable.

We must take the lead in producing a financial return on our environmental investment, a return in terms of new businesses and new jobs for our residents. That is why the stimulation of new businesses has become my new focus.

This implies no backing off from our environmental focus. Of all the cities in New Zealand and the Pacific only Waitakere has, at its heart, a massive rainforest. Not for us, the Octagon, the Square, Lambton Quay or Viaduct Basin. Our heart is an ancient rainforest that gives us both our name and our identity.

There is, in my view, however, a frequently underestimated link between the quality of our environment and economic growth. More than half of the international visitors to New Zealand visit conservation areas. And in Waitakere City many international film/television projects have taken advantage of our physical beauty, prominent examples including *The Piano*, *Hercules*, *Xena*, *Power Rangers*.

I see our environmental achievements as the platform upon which we shall grow new businesses and new jobs. We have got the conservation principles more or less right. Our environment is protected, and we can now set about promoting economic development without serious risk of damaging irreplaceable assets.

The fact is, however, that we are not achieving the level of business development we should. And I want to go beyond discussion in house. I want us out there: making a noise, marketing our city. We should be celebrating what is possible in the West. And as head of the new Mayoral Business Marketing Taskforce I intend to do just this.

I'm hoping to see the re-launch of the Lincoln North Industrial Centre in the next few months, and a significant rounding up of potential business investors. Expect a roll-out of excellent well considered projects. Many will want to take ownership of them, and I welcome this.

For my own part I will be heading a team to present the Waitakere Central design to our city, and to key investment groups in Auckland and Wellington. My presentation includes PowerPoint and a model of Waitakere Central. Councillors will be informed of presentation times and venues, and I would welcome their involvement and assistance.

Through all this we will need to ensure that our strategic planning matches community enthusiasm. Last year, when I was in Melbourne, I spoke with Brisbane Mayor Jim Sorely about the importance of lifestyle. He agreed that you have to have a clear 30-year vision of how a city should be perceived, and who you want to woo to live there.

What I would like to do is grow in Waitakere a new generation of "social entrepreneurs" to complement the great environmental thinkers we have already. These "social entrepreneurs" would mix capitalism and conscience, the methods of business with some of the objectives of social policy. We have had such people working with council in the past. But I doubt we have used them to their full potential. They did not always fit the non-profit council mould. But, in my vision, they are a big part of the future of Waitakere City Council.

Good examples are Lloyd Morrison and Tim Brown of Infratil: enterprising investors in banking and airports (including our own at Whenuapai); but still willing to launch a new New Zealand flag and to release the complete Beethoven Piano Sonatas on their own record label. These are the sorts of people we need to be attracting to both our city and our council.



It is all about balance. My belief is that Waitakere is a fair city, instinctively opposed to racism and unfairness. We are a melting pot city. Young and old. White and brown. And it is unfortunate that we are living at a time when the political 'race card' is being played yet again at national level.

Maori, of all indigenous peoples, have made huge strides towards a sustainable future. They, together with a rainbow of migrants from the Pacific and all over the world, will continue to enrich our society. All our races are welcome and have much to contribute. (I personally welcome hundreds every year at the citizenship ceremonies I conduct in our council chambers.)

We will continue to consult with all of them, to listen to and to implement their new ideas. Waitakere City has long had consultation processes that are the envy of others, and long may this continue. As Mike Moore once said: "Kiwis will do anything if you ask them to, but nothing if you tell them."

How Might the Eco City Look in the Next 30 Years?

Richard Florida (author of "The rise of the creative class: and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and every day life") writes of cities that have transformed themselves, about cities that are attracting young people, investment and new industry. I believe that Waitakere stands at the threshold of such a future.

I see a "Super City". Not super size. But super energy. A city with a powerful sense of its own place, value and identity. An empowering place that draws the very best of people to its beautiful, clean environment.

To understand this Waitakere-of-the-future will be to understand the New Zealand of the future. Just as you must understand Shanghai to understand the China of the future. Or Sydney to understand Australia. I see Waitakere as a leadership city that acts as a model of how and what New Zealand could be.

This City would welcome all people. Of all races. It would be full of green spaces: parks; forests; walks along streams and rivers - all clean and full of life.

There would be less use of motor vehicles than any other city in New Zealand. Such cars as there were would be powered by electricity or hydrogen, and used largely for trips to unusual or remote areas. Replacing the current dependence on cars would be a public transport network of fast trains and small mini buses. Timetables would be regular and frequent.

Public space would be sacrosanct, and never desecrated by graffiti or rubbish. The city would have long ago abandoned plastic bags and glass, and plastic would be recycled at all times. Sculpture and art would be everywhere.

There would be no junk food outlets, no yellow arches that contributed to obesity and disease. Instead the city would have encouraged ethnic communities to create eateries with delicious, healthy food. And as a result the people would be healthier and live longer, the local hospitals and health services less crowded.

Education programmes and community awareness would have eradicated violence against women and children. Cultural diversity would be everywhere. And people would have achieved a balance between the demands of work and pleasure. The young and the old would be included in the decisions of the city planners.

Water would have, since the water crisis of the 1990's, been treated as precious. Sewage would be treated and recycled as fertiliser for parks and gardens.



Waitakere architecture would have a distinctive “arch style” that echoed the ranges, bush, and natural environment. Environmentally friendly public buildings would be large and airy. They would have won much acclaim from architects and they would be adorned with art and visual fun.

Waitakere City would be, because of its vast ethnic diversity, the first city in the world in which the churches of the established Christian faiths had agreed to share their buildings with those from other faiths. And it would not be unusual for such church buildings to host different ceremonies for different ethnic faiths on the same day. There would be tolerance and unity.

In Conclusion

And so in this, my first mayoral report for 2004, I have looked back more than a decade and ahead 30 years. I have portrayed a future city that is possible. It is certainly not just a dream. It is a place inspired by many international cities that are striving for the same.

Waitakere City is special and unique, and is some of the way towards achieving the 30-year vision I have outlined above. We have, perhaps, not realised this, because we have been too busy doing it.

I see a unique Asia-Pacific city here in the future. A city that is a model for both New Zealand and the rest of the world.

Why not?

MILESTONES

Died - Alf Roke

I attended the funeral of this remarkable man. Missionary, husband and father, farmer, humanitarian, and thinker, Alf died just short of his 100th birthday and was farewelled by a congregation of friends at Henderson Baptist Church.

Alf was born in 1904 of hard working pioneering stock, growing up in Matakana where the family established a timber mill. His parents were devout members of the Salvation Army, and as a young man he gave up an electrical engineering career to enter the New Zealand Bible Training Institute, in Auckland City. He graduated in 1926, as top student for the year. His memoirs (They Went Forth), published last year, chronicle an extraordinary 40 years of missionary work, much of it in the wilds of Ethiopia and the Sudan in the 1930s and 40s.

He and wife Tina spent some 20 years in Africa, establishing mission stations, undertaking translation and pasturing. Although he had no formal training, Alf was often called upon to provide urgent medical care.

The family had to hastily leave Ethiopia following the Italian invasion the 1930s. They returned some years later, but couldn't entirely escape war and were in Alexandria during bombing raids in World War II.

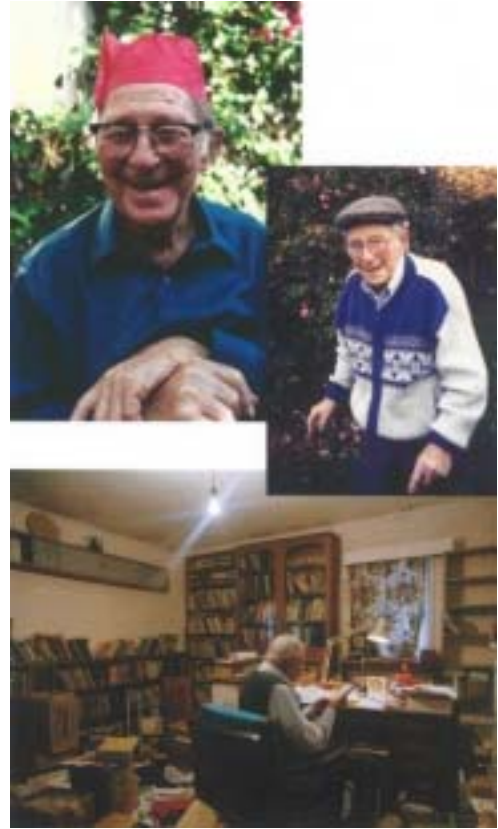
Having resigned from overseas mission work, the family purchased a block of land and established a poultry farm in Henderson Valley. Alf became the first settled minister pastor of the Kumeu Baptist Church, in 1948. The church hall he helped to build still stands as part of the local Racing Club grounds. He was also the first pastor of the Henderson Baptist Church.

Following pastorates in several other New Zealand cities, the Rokes retired to the Henderson Valley Road farm. It was there that Alf lived until, at 99, he moved into a West Harbour Rest Home with his beloved Tina.



A quiet and practical man with strong values and an incredible commitment to his fellow human being, his was truly a good life, well lived.

M1-M4 Attached at pages M1 to M4, is a passage from Alf's book, written by his son Don.





Acknowledged - Frank Nicholas

Frank, at 76 years, old mows and maintains, for no charge, the beautiful park area of Realm Esplanade at Massey. Frank does this weekly. And he not only mows, he clears rubbish and debris. I have sent him a gift and thanks on behalf of all of us here at council. And I would like to record here a very special thanks to this wonderful community-spirited man.

Awarded - Roy Ranby

I have awarded Roy a plaque of the city for his incredible 30-year effort to have council create and implement a management plan for Taipari Strand. He spent 10 of these years on the Taipari Strand sub-committee of our Henderson Community Board, and achieved the planting of trees and shrubs, the creation of a walk way and the general development of the park. Well done Roy.

Died - Dennis Collins

Sadly, however, I must note here the death of Roy Ranby's (see "awarded" above) long-time associate Dennis Collins. Dennis worked with Roy for 30 years to help achieve the management plan for Taipari Strand. He was a mechanic with Fleet Air Arm of the British Royal Navy in World War II. He was a civil engineer involved in the creation of Kelly Tarlton's in Auckland, and similar projects in countries such as Australia, China, Thailand and Singapore. Dennis is survived by his wife Mary and son Mark. This council extends deepest sympathy to his family.

Died - Ian K Robertson

Ian K Robertson was elected to the former Waitemata City Council in 1986. He served as a Councillor for one term, until the 1989 amalgamation of Waitemata City with the Glen Eden, Henderson and New Lynn Borough Councils. During his term of office he was appointed to a number of Council Committees. He was initially appointed to the Finance and Management Committee, the General Purposes Committee and the Civic and Public Relations Committee. He also served on the Parks and Community Development Committee. In October 1988 he was appointed to the Policy and Finance Committee, on which he served as Deputy Chairperson. He was also appointed, at this time, to the Parks Committee, the Community Development Committee and the Sister Cities Subcommittee.

Named - Waitakere's New Super Hub

I am very pleased at community reaction to "Waitakere Central" as the new name for our new transport hub and civic centre. Since publication of the name in news media I have heard only had good comments. It seems the community has taken on board our concept of a new town centre complete with council facilities, bus-rail interchange and a link across the railway to join two sides of a town that have been separated for over a hundred years. This project will act as a catalyst for major new investment in our city, and I am especially pleased that former mayors and councillors, often the decision makers in our community, are applauding the new name. All staff and councillors please note - "Henderson Hub" is tabu. "Waitakere Central" ... here we come!

Saved - Colin McCahon's Titirangi Bach

M5

I am really pleased to have played a part in saving for posterity the former Titirangi residence of New Zealand's greatest artist. And I am delighted to see that a new house and studio are to be build adjacent to the bach in order to offer artist-in-residence opportunities to both New Zealand and overseas applicants. Attached at page M5 is a North and South article.



Survived - Barry Shaw and Wife Pat

I was pleased to hear that the Henderson Community Board's Barry Shaw, and wife Pat, were to celebrate their 50th (Golden) wedding anniversary on 20 February. Barry describes himself and Pat as "survivors" and the event as "a testament to my wife's forbearance". Barry has given great service to Waitakere City and I gladly acknowledge this milestone in his life.

Also Still Going - the Roaring Forties Surf Event

March 13 to 14 will see the ninth Roaring Forties Surf event at Piha. The event was first run on Labour Weekend 1996 in response to "returning longboarders" looking for an event to bring them together to celebrate the earliest days of surfing in New Zealand. This is a fun competition that lets the 40-years-plus surfers and their families get together over a weekend to enjoy the waves and the company. The format includes events for longboarders, shortboarders, kneeboarders, and tandem. Beach digs and a treasure hunt will keep the kids happy.

PIHA RADIO 88FM

Piha Radio 88FM broadcasts from the Piha Store, and is run by a board of directors that includes Pete Chapman, the new entrepreneur-environmentalist of Piha. Pete has a long history in radio, and was involved at Mai FM. He is providing a fantastic service for the Piha community with a station that creates the opportunity for local people to do their own thing on air. I do a half hour or so every Saturday. So if you are out at Piha, don't miss it. You could be on it!

M6-M9 The Piha radio station will seek trust status in a year. And I am pleased to attach a draft document at pages M6 to M9, describing their charter and operating model. The three directors would appreciate feedback from council and community.

FUTURE OF THE WAITAKERE RANGES

At this, the first council meeting for 2004, I would like to acknowledge the extra work that has been put into the Waitakere Ranges Project. When it is completed we will have clarity on whether or not current long-term protection of the Ranges is adequate, and if not, what should be done. And we will be able to say with pride that it was us who made the critical contribution to saving the Ranges for future generations.

M10-M34 The Waitakere Ranges Project is more complex than we thought, but I am sure all councillors, even those concerned at the slowing down of the project, will be reassured of our commitment. To achieve our goal it is crucial that we get the consultation right with the thousands of local landowners. If we do not, there is a danger our solutions will not endure. We must, therefore, listen to all: the protectors of the ranges; the environmental groups; and the landholders. All must feel they have had their say, and been heard. And we must be open to creative solutions that might evolve from the dialogue. I would like to encourage all those involved in this process to work constructively and creatively to find the best possible way that we can protect the Ranges whilst allowing landowners reasonable use of their land, and people to live and flourish. Attached at pages M10 to M34, the summary and workshop notes for the phase one community consultation.



The historical opportunity to save the Ranges is now. We have a council motivated to make it happen. All our local MPs are committed. We have a Prime Minister who loves the outdoors, and will listen when we go to her with our proposals. And we have a community consultation process that is working and scheduled to deliver an outcome by the middle of this year.

In 1992 I came in from Karekare with a mission to work towards a sustainable future of the Ranges. It was the driving factor that energised my campaign to become the Mayor of the City. I urge all of the players, staff and politicians, to continue to support the process. This council may build outstanding libraries and stadiums. We may dream big political dreams. But the natural environment is the legacy that will outlast them all. If it is lost it can never be rebuilt. It will be lost forever.

Protection of the Ranges is not a new endeavour, and I cannot pay enough respect to the people that have gone before: gifting land; and protecting the Ranges as a special unique place. The successful completion of the Waitakere Ranges Project could be the culmination of our 12-year effort to make Waitakere New Zealand's first sustainable Eco City.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Report of the Mayor be received.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE CITY