

## WAITANGI RUA RAUTAU ADDRESS - THE TE ARAWA PARTNERSHIP MODEL JOURNEY

### **Whakataau:**

- “Ehara taku toa I te toa takitahi engari. He toa takitini ke”
- *My strength does not come from me alone, my strength comes from many.*

### ***My personal journey -***

- My lens on bi-culturalism has been shaped by my exposure to the Māori world since meeting my husband John at 14 years of age in small-town Hastings.
- Like most of us in the sixties, who were raised in white urban New Zealand at that time, my experiences with the Māori world were limited to school and sport and propelled by an intrigue with Māori students at school who were somehow different to us and who tended to live in settlements way out on the outskirts of the town belt.

- They bussed in to school while we biked; and I was intrigued with their living arrangements but I didn't know what a Pa was.
- If I was a typical pākehā New Zealander at that time, then bi-culturalism was still a long way off after 120 years of colonisation.
- But the accelerating post-war urbanisation, particularly in the sixties changed all that and it eventually changed me.
- After all, I had a Māori boyfriend and I was learning a lot from him and his whānau.

- I liked the idea of all the families living together and growing up together with a shared meeting house that I never entered.
- Communal living has appealed to me ever since.
- I was fortunate to see great role models in Hastings where I grew up. There were Māori families who were strong and their kids proved they were as good as anyone else.
- Strong Māori families like the Apatu's, the Jacksons, the Bennetts, the Ormsbys and the Chadwicks.

- They were achievers and all-rounders in academics and in sport.
- I, of course, had no idea of their cultural perspective and their way of seeing and being.
- I knew only that they were people affiliated to the Kahungunu tribe because we had been taught at primary school about the great migration and the tribe that made Hawkes Bay its homeland.
- That was about all I learned about Māori in the curriculum. The Treaty lesson came later on at High School and even then that was fairly muted too.

- It was through John that I learned that families had two mountains, two rivers, two lakes and two canoes.
- It was through him that I learned about his family journey of travelling from an iwi on one side of the island to another on the other side because they belonged to both – a journey from the paternal River (Whanganui) and Maunga (Ruapehu) to the maternal homeland of Te Hauke in Heretaunga and then the great urban migration of the sixties to the upscale village of Havelock North.
- They farewelled their rural valley paradises to follow the dream and the jobs that took them into the cities where they came face to face for the first time with people like me.
- And while the emphasis was always to upskill and improve their lot, they remained true to themselves and their cultural place in the sun.

- I loved the folksy way that Pop (John's father) painted his corrugated fence in different colours and his different way of making a garden full of ornaments.
- I loved the shared meals and the fellowship in the house but John and I were shy in our sweetheart phase.
- This may be because my parents were mildly disapproving of our determination to stay together.
- For it was said that I was too young and he needed to concentrate on his career opportunity.

- He was after all the first in his family, his whanau, his Marae and his hapū to go to university and I was seen as a bit risky and very possibly a fly in the ointment.
- The only disapproval I felt from his side was when his Nanny Huti met me for the first time and she was clearly unimpressed with this young pakeha woman who bounced up to say hello.
- She came to the view that John could not be trusted to manage the family lands if he had a pākehā woman in his whare, and they weren't even married either!
- That rattled me a bit.

- I was later to learn that there were vast tracks of forestry land in the Central North Island plateau from his Tūwharetoa side.
- But that was not why I fell in love with this (hard to believe) quiet, shy and intelligent young man who was captain of the First Fifteen.

- It was at Victoria University in the sixties that our political awareness and activism began.
- That was inspired by the Vietnam War but also by the Ngā Tamatoa movement and our friendship with Syd and Moana Jackson and others.
- Moana and John were at school together.
- Rugby too remained a glue for me; I was a passive onlooker but I loved the camaraderie, the parties, the singing and the hāngi after the games.

- All the while, I was busy gaining my nursing and Midwifery qualifications.
- I was keenly interested in the burgeoning radical activism of the 60s and the new Māori world view that was being promoted.
- But I was more focussed on a Nuclear-Free NZ and the emerging issue of apartheid in South Africa and the role NZ played in raising awareness of the impact of separatism.
- We knew that when we travelled together, if we went to South Africa we could not share the same hotel, let alone the same bed, and that shocked me.

- I learned more of the impact of colonisation on our travels.
- We spent a year in Papua New Guinea in 1972 where I watched the impact of Australian rule coming to an end before Independence that was to begin in 1973.
- Although I like to think that that experience of colonisation was the first to impact upon me, the truth is that it impacted on me when I first met John because clearly, we were in different worlds in the same country.
- A long period of four years overseas on our OE gave us more insight into our colonial past and our links with mother England.

- We then yearned to come home and expose our (then) two children to a bi-cultural upbringing.
- We knew the time was right when our two-year old son Eli saw on TV, the massed kapa haka performance at the opening of the Commonwealth Games in Christchurch in 1974 and he pointed to them and innocently asked – “Whats that Mama?”

- From our journey together and our experiences and the things that we have chosen to get involved with, there is a common thread of tolerance, fairness, equity and doing the right thing.
- We bring our life experiences to the table.
- Mine have been imbued by the fact that I have learned to be every bit as bicultural as my husband.
- He knows how to walk in two worlds and so do I.

- I should add by way of subtext that we have dedicated nearly 40 years of our lives to Rotorua.
- John as a lawyer well-known for his work among Te Arawa and recently honoured with the award of Member of the NZ Order of Merit.
- I have been an MP in Rotorua for 12 years.
- It is against that journey that I faced down my biggest challenge as the Mayor of Rotorua.

- So that there could be no uncertainty, no ambiguity and no hesitation - when the time came to go into partnership with Te Arawa, I would do the right thing by my life experiences.
- I am fortunate that a majority of my councillors chose to do the right thing too and walk beside me on that journey.
- **START POWERPOINT PRESENTATION**

***The Te Arawa Partnership***

- A month after I won the Rotorua mayoral election in 2013, Te Arawa did an unusual thing – they invited me to formally meet with them at Tamatekapua, their principal marae.
- They have done that many times before when I wore different hats but this invitation was a first.
- They have never done that to a newly-elected Mayor before and it is worth mentioning – Rotorua's first female Mayor at that.
- It placed a certain gravitas on the occasion, almost like a tapu.

- I knew them all and they all knew me.
- I have worked with many of them in my other lives.
- But this was different. I knew the value of working in partnership with a sleeping giant and this was clearly an opportunity to advance that cause because the timing was right.
- And so it was that on the Marae that day I made the announcement to seek a new way to work constructively together with iwi. It was as simple as that. My intention was made clear.

- I formally announced that:
- ***“Council, under my leadership is about to embark on a new process to find and build on an enduring and sustainable partnership with Te Arawa.***
- ***I say that because the hidden economy in Rotorua is Māori, the biggest ratepayers in Rotorua are Māori, the sleeping giant of the Rotorua economy is Māori – it’s called the taniwha economy and it has bubbled to the surface full of vim and vigor.”***
- It was well received by Te Arawa and that sense of well-being and hope has never deserted them throughout what happened from then on.

- On the 26 May 2015, at an extraordinary meeting, the Rotorua Lakes Council voted eight votes to five to adopt a partnership model with Te Arawa.
- Nearly 100 Te Arawa marched from Tamatekapua Marae in Ōhinemutu to show their support of the model.
- More than 250 people attended the meeting and 506 watched the live stream through the Rotorua Lakes Council website.
- It was a momentous moment in the history of Rotorua.

***The history to this point***

- The Rotorua Lakes Council (it was previously Rotorua District Council but we changed it) has a long-standing history of working closely with the Te Arawa dating back to the Fenton Agreement of 1880 made between hapu of Te Arawa and the Crown.
- It was that agreement that established the township of Rotorua and the development of the region and that was confirmed in the Thermal Springs Districts Act of 1881.
- The town was born.

- Over the years, a number of mechanisms have been established to recognise Te Arawa's katiakitanga role and to involve the iwi in council decision-making processes.
- There have been memoranda of understanding, joint management agreements and the Te Arawa Standing Committee.
- The idea of the Te Arawa Standing Committee came about in 1989.
- Te Arawa proposed the formation of a Māori advisory committee to meet the requirements of a number of statutes.

- No one was in a hurry because it took four years to establish the agreement between Rotorua District Council and Te Arawa that established the Te Arawa Standing Committee in October 1993.
- The terms of reference for the Committee were that ***“Matters of the Council which impinge upon the collective resources of any Te Arawa tribe, sub-tribe or hapu or whanau, should be reviewed by the Standing committee, but the Standing Committee shall in no way usurp the tino rangatiratanga of any Te Arawa tribe, sub-tribe and hapu or whānau”.***

- Between 1993 and 2009, the Standing Committee consisted of four Council positions (with the Chair and Deputy Chair positions being held by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor), three iwi representatives who were elected every three years at Te Papaouru Marae at Ōhinemutu<sup>1</sup>, and appointed representatives from three Te Arawa authorities (Te Arawa Lakes Trust (previously the Te Arawa Māori Trust Board), Te Pukenga Koeke o Te Arawa and the Federation of Māori Authorities).
  - It was reviewed only once in 2007 – 13 years after establishment.
  - That review changed the iwi component of the Committee requiring elections while the Mayor continued to remain in the Chair.
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- At the time of its establishment, the Te Arawa Standing Committee model was recognised as a bold and innovative approach to meeting the Treaty obligations that all Councils faced across a number of pieces of legislation.
- While the form of the Te Arawa Standing Committee has changed little since its inception, the way Te Arawa itself functions has changed significantly over the years with new entities springing up and mandated to represent iwi on various matters.
- It should be noted that over recent years, significant concerns that garnered media attention, began to emerge as to the effectiveness of the Committee.
- Those concerns included a lack of clarity around its purpose, the outdated structure of the partnership model and the lack of clear connection with stakeholders.
- Most vociferous of all was criticism by its members that its Chair was the Mayor and that was colonial and patronising.

- It came to a head in 2012 when the relationship between Te Arawa and the Rotorua District Council was seriously compromised when the Environment Court ruled against the Council on a matter relating to a proposed sewerage scheme for the Rotoma and Rotoiti communities.
- The Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BoPRC), after a public submission and hearing process, had granted resource consent for a proposed wastewater treatment and land disposal system.
- The granted resource consent was appealed to the Environment Court by Ngāti Pikiao and Ngāti Makino.
- The Court hearing commenced on 9 July 2012.

- At the end of a week of evidence, the Judge, the Commissioners and the lawyers met “in chambers” to discuss a problem that the proposed location of the treatment and disposal site was in close proximity to a culturally significant site.
- That problem arose because the Council process failed to seek input from the Standing Committee and heed the advice of the Council’s Cultural Advisor.
- The Court instructed the Council to investigate alternative sites that would satisfy all legal, technical, financial and cultural requirements.
- The Council could not comply within the set time-frame and it cut its losses by surrendering the resource consent altogether.
- The Māori applicants applied for costs and were awarded [\$115,000.00].
- That award was not appealed.

- The key aspect of the Environment Court appeal and subsequent decision to award costs against the Rotorua District Council was the insufficiency of stakeholder engagement in the development.
- To put that another way, the consultation with Māori was alarmingly inadequate.
- And so it was that after the district elections in 2013, Councillors agreed that there was a need to establish a better, more inclusive and more effective partnership model with iwi than the Standing Committee.
- Importantly, that gained the support of Te Arawa.
- The new model would have to have a clear purpose and clear functions as well as strengthening the partnership with the Rotorua District Council.
- It would affirm iwi/hapu rangatiratanga and be an effective advocate for Te Arawa interests.

- In particular, it was acknowledged that Te Arawa needed to control its own agenda.
- As a result, the proposed new model spelled the end of the Te Arawa Standing Committee after the 2013 local body elections.
- To utilise available experience, the former members of the Standing Committee were asked to operate as a working party to coordinate the new initiative within Te Arawa.
- This initiative was foreshadowed in the *Rotorua 2030 Vision* strategic plan.
- On 1 May 2014, the working party provided a Council forum with a confidential draft paper, written by a Māori lawyer Tama Hovell of Atkins Holm Majurey detailing partnership options.

- From May to December 2014 the draft options paper was shared and discussed with all of Te Arawa during an extensive round of consultation hui to gain agreement on a model.
- On the 18 December 2014, at a meeting of the Rotorua Lakes Council, the working party presented the 'Te Arawa Partnerships Proposal' and asked that the wider community be consulted on their proposed model.
- That model included the establishment of an independent Board to represent Te Arawa interests.
- It was also recommended that Council consider the appointment of representatives of this Board to key council committees.

- The intention of these appointments was to provide a Te Arawa perspective on important debates and decision-making.
- At that time two of these committees (the Strategy, Policy and Finance Committee and the Operations and Monitoring Committee) had been delegated to make decisions on behalf of Council.
- Following an intensive debate, Councillors agreed to consult with the community on four options.
- They included (1) the proposal put forward by Te Arawa, (2) re-establishing the Te Arawa Standing Committee, (3) supporting the Te Arawa proposal without voting rights, and (4) extending the existing Memorandum of Understanding approach.

- A vocal anti-partnership lobby group emerged during this process.
- This group expressed the view that only democratically elected representatives should be involved in Council committees and that if the partnership proposal was adopted it would give disproportionate power to Te Arawa.
- A seven-week period of consultation began on 23 February 2015 and closed on 17 April 2015.
- Consultation included a series of public information sessions run by council officers to explain the proposal and the other options.
- Residents of Rotorua and other interested parties were encouraged to have their say by completing feedback forms either online or in hard copy, or by emailing or writing to Council with comments.

- Nearly 1900 submissions and four petitions were lodged.
- The largest petition was organised by a group that defined itself as the 'Pro-Democracy Society' and included 1370 signatures.
- Two hundred submitters accepted the invitation to speak directly to the Mayor and Councillors about their submissions.
- Hearings took place over five days between 30 April and 11 May 2015.

- Views expressed in the submissions ranged from:
  - a fear that the partnership posed a distinct threat to democracy and that Te Arawa was a special interest group and should not have any more representation than that allowed to any other group (thus ignoring council's statutory requirements towards Māori and Tangata Whenua under the Local Government Act 2002 and the Resource Management Act 1991);
  - to those who felt that the proposed model did not deliver enough for Te Arawa who had been relegated to sitting “in the next room” away from serious decision-making for too long.

- On 26 May 2015, at an extraordinary meeting of the Rotorua Lakes Council, a modified Te Arawa Partnership Model was adopted and the Chief Executive of Council was instructed to ask the Te Arawa working party to continue working with Council and Te Arawa to develop arrangements, policies and agreements to support the proposed Te Arawa Board and appointment process for Te Arawa representatives.
- The revised model modified the Te Arawa Partnership Model, not by removing voting rights, but by clarifying that committees were recommendatory.
- Instead of the Strategy, Policy and Finance Committee and the Operations and Monitoring Committee being delegated to make decisions on behalf of Council, it was proposed that their delegations be restricted to making recommendations back to full Council for consideration and ultimate decision-making.

- This new model was adopted because it retained the overall structure of the Te Arawa Partnership Model and maintained voting rights, but restricted the decision-making powers of the committees.
  
- The vocal minority were not appeased.
  
- For other local authorities seeking to better meet their legal and statutory responsibilities to engage closely with Māori and Tangata Whenua, it is my experience that the lessons learned in Rotorua are:
  - firstly, that transparency with the community is essential; and
  
  - secondly, that the public should have comprehensive advice on the special consultative procedure used.
  
- As well, in this particular paddock, bravery is required to do the right thing. My recommendation is that if you go down this pathway, obtain excellent legal advice and take things slowly and methodically.

- From when it was first proposed, the Te Arawa Partnership Model was hotly debated within the Rotorua community.
- Following the adoption of the model, an open letter from me as Mayor was published in local newspapers.
- My message was one of ***pride in being part of a community that was not afraid to look at the hard questions and having difficult conversations.***
- I acknowledged that establishing a more enduring, sustainable and meaningful relationship model with Te Arawa had been one of those tough discussions, underpinned by legislation and a firm belief that the future of the city required that iwi be involved in decision-making.

- There is no doubt that the process was divisive.
- I came out in support of council officers who acted in the best interests of the organisation and the community while enduring public abuse from verbal submitters who were brutal about what they felt had gone wrong in the past.
- I'm proud to say that Te Arawa remained dignified and steadfast throughout the process.
- And then there were the younger submitters – the new thinkers, the new shapers and the new movers who will shape the district into the future and even more heartening, many of those young ones were of Te Arawa.

- On the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015, at Tamatekapua meeting house at Ōhinemutu, the Te Arawa Partnership Board was inaugurated and the Partnership Agreement was signed.
- It was time to move forward and reap its benefits.
- That Rotorua should be a leader in this field is appropriate for a city, much like Wellington and the Hutt Valley, which came to and grew up around Marae and Pā that have always been there and always will be.
- Having planted the seed, we must now nurture and develop the plant for the sustaining rewards to come.

***Whakatauki-Te Rangiiwaho (Ngati Whakaue)***

Whiri te kaha      Combine our strengths together to form a sturdy rope.

Tuamakatia      Double it, tighten it.

E motu honoa      Should the rope break, re-fasten it.

Purutia Rotorua      Hold true to Rotorua.

Steve Chadwick  
Mayor of Rotorua  
31<sup>st</sup> January 2016