

Speech – Tim Pankhurst

The opening quote in this book is from Virginia Woolf. Nothing has really happened until it is written down.

We know the discovery and development of the orange roughy fishery in the early 1980s did happen but that rich history had not been captured until now.

The genesis of this book was a desire by DWG chief exec George Clement and the Fishing Industry Association to document that history.

I was given that commission and it consumed me for 18 months or so in writing it, whilst also fulfilling a fairly demanding day job.

That was a privilege. In my view the resulting *Roughy on the Rise* is an important piece of social history that encompasses the politics of the day as well as the development of the QMS and the wider seafood industry.

It is candid and some may be uncomfortable with that but there is no denying orange roughy were overfished as all sectors struggled to come to terms with its mysterious life cycle and its sustainability.

Ultimately, it is a story of redemption and success and an affirmation that we can harvest responsibly in helping to provide healthy food and wealth to our country.

Roughy on the Rise is not a navel-gazing exercise for internal industry consumption. The book is on public sale in bookshops throughout the country from tomorrow and will no doubt spark some conversation and controversy.

I do owe some thanks to a number of people, most importantly those who gave freely of their time and their experiences in what was an extraordinary time in our fishery. I thought it might be difficult drawing people out but in fact it was the opposite. They wanted to tell their stories. And what stories some of them are.

I am filled with admiration for the courage and determination the roughy pioneers showed.

I asked one who is here tonight, who is pictured standing nonchalantly in the stern of his small inshore vessel, decks awash, hatches open, roughy piled high and a big bag still to be brought aboard:

How big were your balls?

He laughed and said they're a lot smaller now.

Another one, also here tonight, has long been ashore but he said there was not a day goes by where he doesn't think of the remarkable time fishing for roughy and wishes he was still out there.

I really appreciate those involved in the fishery taking the time and trouble and expense to be here tonight.

I imagine there will be some entertaining yarns told, some of which may be true.

But while the fishermen were central to the story of roughy, I soon came to realise it is much wider than that.

It is the story of science and of honouring the Treaty and the promises made by the Crown to Maori, of observers reporting on what was going on beyond the horizon, and of the pioneers of the industry, the strongest of the strong, who risked all to build empires, or in some cases who lost the lot.

My thanks, too, to my wife Sue who put up with my absences as I wrote this book.

Writing a book has been likened to the closest males get to giving birth.

Not as painful, certainly, but more protracted and it does require a fair degree of determination.

I was very much encouraged by the publisher, Roger Steele of Steele Roberts, who is a demanding editor and all the better for that. We became friends in the process.

I love the design and feel of the finished product and thank designer Sarah Bolland for the striking cover.

And thanks to my friends and Seafood NZ colleagues for coming along here tonight.

It is now my please to hand over to George Clement who worked for years to achieve MSC certification of orange roughly. This is a special occasion for him.