

BEFORE AND AFTER



CHANGING TIMES: Two views of Hangaroa's main street: the top photograph (by Georgia Lee) dates from 1981; the lower photograph was taken this past June by Marla Wold. In 1981, this street was called Policarpo Toro. Today it is known as Atamu Te Kena. And it has undergone other changes. The unpaved roads in those earlier days turned into mud soup when it rained; when dry, passing vehicles (and pedestrians) were enveloped in clouds of red dust. There were few vehicles then, and limited shops and services. The weekly flight to Santiago can be seen departing, in the upper right.

Today things have changed dramatically. Roads are paved, and rain gutters carry away the run-off from rainstorms. Shops and restaurants line the streets and cars swarm over the "downtown" area, causing traffic jams. There are thousands of vehicles on the island now. Direct TV comes in from Chile as does internet and WiFi. And now, in summer, there are daily flights to the island. Chileans are moving to the island in large numbers, looking for a better life. This influx is stressing the infrastructure, and the newcomers take jobs that might have gone to Rapanui islanders.