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JOURNAL of museums aotearoa  
special issue: MUSEUM STUDIES IN NEW ZEALAND

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# te ara

## JOURNAL of museums aotearoa SPECIAL ISSUE: MUSEUM STUDIES IN NEW ZEALAND

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# Editorial

Since its relaunch as *te ara – JOURNAL of museums aotearoa* in 2001, the journal has covered an eclectic range of topics and types of article. This openness to diversity takes a step further with this first “themed issue”. The focus is: Museum Studies in New Zealand.

## Research and relevance

Conal McCarthy and Bronwyn Labrum, both currently academics with solid professional museum experience behind them, introduce the theme by describing the evolving field of museum studies and locating it in the context of developments in New Zealand’s heritage sector. They have assembled examples of recent research from universities that offer courses of study taken by students wanting to enter the sector. These three examples, which have undergone a formal refereeing process, illustrate how museum studies can both inform, and stimulate us to reflect upon, our practice individually and institutionally.

## Training issues

Museum studies offer one route towards a career in museums, but there are others. This issue of *Te Ara* is timely, given the new initiatives heralded by the Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation (ATTO) taking responsibility for in-service training within our sector. Museums Aotearoa’s new Executive Director, Phillipa Tocker, explains how the sector will benefit and also actively contribute to on-going development.

Internships are another means of “fleshing out” museum studies learning in the work place. Despite being well-established practice in several overseas museum sectors, internships are not an integral part of training and development in New Zealand. Ashley Remer states her case for reconsidering the potential for internships.

## Active debate

In its Statement of Intent, *Te Papa* aspires to be a “forum for the nation”, recognised throughout the country as a place of active debate. This aspiration is increasingly shared by other museums as they seek to engage their various audiences and communities of support. In addition to local people, these interested parties or stakeholders include established researchers. However, the scholarly aspect of museums, especially in traditional disciplines such as the natural sciences, may have been overshadowed in recent years by the shift towards “customer- focussed” missions and more readily intellectually accessible displays.

Research based on museum collections achieved great prominence in the foundation years of both museums and academic disciplines. Richard Wolfe’s *Moa: the dramatic story of the discovery of a giant bird*, (2003) documented a classic New Zealand example. In this issue Paul Scofield and colleagues show us that our museums continue to contribute to the pursuit of new knowledge and that museum collections serve as enduring points of reference for settling issues of scientific classification. The museum tradition of scholarly publishing, as recounted by Brian Gill, reinforces the position of our major museums as integral threads within the web of international research networks.

## Constant purpose

Our museums have an abiding commitment to the generation of new knowledge – directly, by staff and volunteer effort, and indirectly, by members of the public and researchers using the collections and other knowledge resources found within museums. Equal weight is given to the sharing of that knowledge both externally, through the public means of exhibition, publication, special programmes and web media, and internally, through innovation, collaboration and improved practice. The creation and dissemination of knowledge represent both continuing goals and sustaining values of our sector. What we have yet to determine is an effective means of clearly demonstrating museums’ actual and potential contributions to the “knowledge economy” and the “knowledge society”.

## Reference

Wolfe, Richard (2003) *Moa: the dramatic story of the discovery of a giant bird*. Penguin: Auckland.

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# Museum studies and museums: Bringing together theory and practice

Bronwyn Labrum and Conal McCarthy

Nearly 90 years after its inception, the discipline of museum studies still finds itself caught between the ideals of theory and practice, with one foot in the university and one in the museum (Speiss 1996, p.32).

In 2002 Te Papa presented *Aainaa: Reflections through Indian weddings*, an exhibition about Indian communities in New Zealand. This display generated a great deal of thought and discussion, a process that went beyond staff meetings to a wider public circle. The form that *Aainaa* took – concepts, objects, interactives, design, labels, and programmes – were all developed in response to earlier exhibitions, ongoing audience research and exhibition evaluation. Critical reflection on the process of community collaborations led to academic articles by Stephanie Gibson, one of the history curators involved, which in turn led to an article by a member of the Indian advisory group. This was a valuable exchange which generated international interest from critics, scholars and exhibition developers. *Aainaa* was also the subject of a recent Masters thesis in museum studies. All in all, this one exhibition generated a considerable amount of research and writing, which drew on and fed back into the literature of museum studies (*Aainaa* focus group report, 2002; Anderson, 2001; Harvey, 2002; Gibson 2003; Wood, 2005; Ballard, 2005; Karp, Lavine & Kreamer, 1992).

In this introduction we consider the study of museums, and the relationship between theory and practice. We argue that the value of museum studies to the profession lies in the ways in which it critically examines ways of thinking about and doing things in museums. As Stephanie Gibson explains:

As museum professionals we have a responsibility to document our practices not only for the historical record, but also for our contemporaries to consider. At the same time, we also have a responsibility to encourage documentation from community points of view (Gibson, 2005).

What kind of training or study should students do at tertiary level to prepare for working in the sector? Should universities be producing graduates who are “industry-ready”, as well as academically skilled? Museum collections, exhibitions and programmes clearly cannot be seen simply as a matter of professionals at the coal face ‘doing it’ in contrast to academics in the ivory tower ‘talking about it’. Despite the persistent myth that professionals have no time for abstract ideas and that academics are impractical, people are working *and* reflecting on that work in ways which shed light on what they do. Academic theory and professional practice are often separated out in discussions about training in the museum and heritage sector, but they are two sides of the same coin – mutually constitutive rather than diametrically opposed. If theory has practical outcomes, it follows that everyday practices also have theoretical implications. In what follows we review the development of museum studies and consider its application to the vocational field with which it has a close but problematic relationship.

To be fair, both academics and practitioners are guilty of imbalance in their treatment of museums. As Andrea Witcomb and Randolph Starn have noted, there is a current tendency for academics to analyse museums from a theoretical standpoint that contributes much to the critical literature of cultural studies but pays less attention to the actual practices in museums nor acknowledges their contradictory and complex nature. They problematise these often tendentious, static, and gloom-laden ‘readings’ of exhibitions and down-play the multiple ways that they may be ‘read’ but also experienced (Starn, 2005; Witcomb, 2003; Gillespie, 2001; Thomas, 1996, 1999). By the same token, museum practitioners often profess the view that hands-on vocational skills are all people need to learn when they enter the profession, despite the obvious fact that these very skills, like all social practices, are

socially imbedded and historically produced. In our view, the most successful contributions to a balanced approach to museum studies has come from writers who attempt to mesh theory with practice. Peter Vergo calls for thinking about the politics of museum work – that is to say the *why* rather than the *how* of the way things are done – in an attempt to make museum practices self aware and reflexive (1989, p.3). In a similar vein, Sharon Macdonald proposes a model allowing for critical feedback between social theory and museum practice (1996, p.3).

### What is museum studies?

'Museum studies' can be described as the academic analysis of museum history, theory and practice, a critical examination of diverse aspects of museums within their social context. Museum studies is therefore a broader field of study than 'museology', the scientific study of specific museum methods (Simmons, 2005; Teather, 1991). Everything in the museum, indeed the museum itself, is an object of study:

Each museum site, whether it be the entire institution, the permanent collections and collecting policies ... the public programs, the retail store or the restaurant is ... itself a cultural artifact (Carbonell, 2004, p.2).

Drawing on related disciplines such as art history, history, sociology, anthropology, and more recent postmodern hybrids such as literary theory, cultural studies, postcolonial studies and visual culture, museum studies quickly developed a diverse and wide-ranging corpus of work that goes some way towards exploring a hitherto under-theorised terrain (McDonald, 1996; MacLeod, 2001). Nevertheless, some argue that museum studies is not a discipline as such but a reflective practice (Teather, 1991, p.409), a unique and active inter-relationship between academia and its associated field, in which the museum provides a kind of 'laboratory' for testing out ideas. In the 1980s and 1990s there were major developments in the field with new models of museums and widespread changes in practice, a 'new museology' which shaped, and was shaped by, intellectual debate in the academy (Anderson, 2004; MacLeod, 2001).

Positioned on the edge of several currents of intellectual enquiry, museum studies has absorbed a



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CONAL MCCARTHY

range of new theories about the study of society and culture, identity and representation and the social construction of human meaning. Postmodern museum theorists critically re-examined taken-for-granted conventions such as collecting and display, the supposedly common sense practices that have long underpinned museum functions. To take three examples, John Elsner and Roger Cardinal have studied objects in museums as part of 'cultures of collecting', the 'material embodiment' of human perceptions (Cardinal & Elsner, 1994, p.2). Often overlooked as a 'natural form within the life of an institution,' Bruce Ferguson argued that the actual work exhibitions do 'on and through audiences' was largely neglected. He advocated an analysis of the 'politics of representivity, meaning who is represented, how and in what ways' (Ferguson, 1996, p.175, 178). Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine encouraged the application of new critical theories as a way of addressing the politics of museum display:

Exhibitions made today may seem obviously appropriate to some viewers precisely because those viewers share the same attitudes as the exhibition makers, and the exhibitions are cloaked in familiar presentational styles. We discover the artifice when we look at older installations or those made in other cultural contexts. The very nature of exhibiting, then, makes it a contested terrain (Karp & Lavine, 1991, p.1).

Museums, it seems, are a hot topic among critics, scholars and writers. As Sharon Macdonald points

out, the 'contradictory, ambivalent, position which museums are in makes them key cultural loci of our times' (Macdonald, 1996, p.2). Although many writers from different subject areas have interrogated museum objects, exhibitions and programmes from their own perspectives, there is a discernible movement towards an integrated model for the study of museum processes (Corsane, 2005, p.3). Heritage, museum and gallery studies, writes Corsane, are not just cross-disciplinary but post-



LIZ MILDON (INTERNAL PG STUDENT 2005) BEGINS DOCUMENTATION OF KAORE E TAEA E KOE TE KAUTE TE PAENGA KORE (YOU CANNOT MEASURE THE DISTANCE TO INFINITY), 1998, OIL ON CANVAS BY KURA TE WARU REWIRI, FOR THE EXHIBITION PROJECT KURATE@MASSEY. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: CATHERINE HEHIR (INTERNAL PG STUDENT 2005).

disciplinary (Corsane, 2005, xiii). In the last 10-15 years an enormous amount of literature has appeared which has mapped out the major themes, issues and topics in the field (Merriman, 1991; Duncan, 1995; Bennett, 1995; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; McClelland, 2001; Prior, 2002; Knell, 2005). A number of influential anthologies, which pull together much of this work, have provided useful texts for university study (Karp & Lavine, 1991; Karp, Lavine & Kreamer, 1992; Ferguson, 1996; Boswell & Evans, 1999; Anderson, 2004; Carbonell, 2004; Preziosi & Farrago, 2004; Marstine, 2005; Corsane, 2005). Conferences all over the world promote debate and analysis, and journals provide a forum for the discussion and dissemination of ideas (such as *Museums and*

*Society, Museum, Muse, Museum International, Museum Management and Curatorship, Curator, Journal of Material Culture*).

### Genesis and growth

When did museum studies develop as a discipline? According to Speiss, it has been around for almost as long as the modern museum. In France, the Louvre Museum School was established in the 1880s. In the US, the American Association of Museums, founded in 1906, advocated training for work in museums, and the first course was set up in 1908 at the Pennsylvania Museum in Philadelphia, followed by John Cotton Dana's programme at the Newark Museum. University level study began in the US in the 1920s with courses at major university museums, such as the famous programme under Paul Sachs at Harvard (Speiss, 1996). In the UK meanwhile, the Museums Association ran summer courses, and offered its first diploma in 1930 (Simmons, 2005).

In the post-war period, a number of short-term training courses started up. The most notable were the Williamsburg Seminar at Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia first run in 1959 and the Cooperstown Graduate Programmes run by the New York State Historical Association in the 1960s, which pioneered the use of 'living' folk history at outdoor museums (Speiss, 1996). In the 1960s and 1970s there was a boom in university-based courses. American scholars such as Flora Kaplan at New York University and Gail Anderson at John F Kennedy University, did much to consolidate the academic study of museums, while at Leicester a strong group of academics, including Susan Pearce, Gaynor Kavanagh, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, Nick Merriman and Simon Knell produced ground breaking work that laid out the parameters of current scholarship. According to one survey, there are now over 100 courses in North America alone, which offer a combination of university-based taught courses and museum-based internships (Danilov, 1994), but surprisingly, no doctoral programme (Simmons, 2005).

In New Zealand, Professor Keith Thomson pioneered the study of museums (Thomson, 1981). The first tertiary course in museum studies was established by David Butts at Massey University in 1989. Dr Butts, who had extensive experience at the Hawkes Bay



Art Gallery and Museum, completed the first PhD in museum studies in the country in 2003. Massey University now offers an extensive range of extra-mural and residential courses. At Victoria University Michael Volkerling established a Masters programme in museum and heritage studies in 2000, which took advantage of the many cultural organisations in Wellington for student work placements. In 2006 the new director Conal McCarthy will add a certificate, a diploma and a MA (by thesis) to the offerings. At Auckland University, Professor Elizabeth Rankin established a graduate programme in museums and cultural heritage in 2004 in conjunction with Auckland War Memorial Museum staff, which utilises staff from different departments including Art History, Anthropology, and Māori Studies. Elsewhere in the country, aspects of museums are examined in other undergraduate and graduate programmes – public history at Waikato University, curatorial studies at Canterbury, heritage studies at Otago, and visual and material culture at Massey University, Wellington.

### **Integrating theory and practice**

Despite the plethora of courses available there is still debate about what is the right kind of preparation for a career in the museum and heritage sector. Is it best to do practical training, or academic study, or a combination of both? What is the right balance of theory and practice? Previously, training courses focused on the conventional paradigms of museum object and functions such as collections, exhibitions, and conservation (Speiss, 1996). There has been criticism that this kind of on the job training was self-referential and uncritical – people simply focused on the how and not the why, on ‘doing it’ rather than ‘talking about it’ – an approach that did not question fundamentals and failed to introduce innovations (Simmons, 2005). The ‘boom’ in university courses redressed naïve notions of practical skills-based training but some argue that this went too far by constructing a theoretical framework for the study of museums at the expense of professional concerns. Simmons reports ‘the old concern about museums offering uncritical training while universities offer training too disconnected from museums...’ (2005, p.4). Many felt that museum studies was becoming over-intellectualised

and the new books and articles coming out were too obtuse (Speiss, 1996; Stansfield, 1996; Saumarez Smith, 2004). In universities, meanwhile, the fledgling subject was criticised for not being academic enough. Staff from older disciplines complained that museum studies was not a real subject, that it was merely vocational, and that graduate research had no literature to draw on (Teather, 1991). The extraordinary flood of books, journal articles and student theses demonstrates the high level of current research and writing in the field, and has done much to establish the new subject’s intellectual credentials (Rounds, 2001).

Museum professionals felt that there were too many courses, too much variety in course offerings and a lack of common standards. Professional organisations do not necessarily endorse programmes and advertisements for jobs in the sector do not always specify museum studies qualifications. It is questionable whether an undergraduate degree in any related discipline, plus museum training, is enough to equip people to move into today’s work force. Given the diversity, specialisation and complexity of museums at the beginning of the 21st century, with new technologies, issues, and shifting parameters in a number of areas, there is a strong case for the view that only a postgraduate museum qualification gives students the critical and creative thinking *and* practical skills that make them ‘industry ready’ (Volkerling, 1997).

The long-standing tension between theory and practice has been partially resolved, in our view, by a new model of museum studies which combines theory and practice, training and education. Suzanne McLeod points out that the theory/practice dichotomy is a false split, as one always informs the other. Museum studies research is not purely academic but feeds back into ‘communities of practice’ in the workplace (McLeod, 2001, p.53). At the same time, practice should be understood as something that goes beyond mere day-to-day tasks and practical procedures – it could be argued that every time we carry out some activity or procedure, a theory or set of assumptions is in place to give meaning to that action. McLeod argues convincingly for theory-as-practice and vice versa:

The museum practice dimension of museum studies suggests both the incorporation of research findings and training and education (however formal or informal) into the day-to-day practices of the museum as well as the integration of practice-based research findings into training, education and other types of research projects (2001, p.57)

McLeod's model allows for flexible relationships between the museum sector and training providers – professionals in the field become researchers, and academics are immersed in practice – so that everyone collaborates in the service of common goals. This appealing synthesis of research-led practice and practical theory demonstrates, as McLeod says, that museum studies is 'more than the study of museums' (2001, p.58). Obviously there are possibilities for synergies and partnerships: university courses could be situated in relation to sub-degree industry training, so that short courses and workshops in museums can lead to degree programmes. This kind of strategic positioning is in line with local and international moves to identify core competencies in order to provide uniformity of skills across art galleries, museum and heritage organisations, seen recently in ICOM policies for example, as well as programmes in Canada (Simmons, 2005). There is the potential here for universities and the museum sector to work together to provide a continuous and co-ordinated learning stream that goes all the way from introductory skills to post-graduate degrees. It should be possible in New Zealand to explore and build on synergies between different training programmes and providers: for example the landmark Museum Unit Standards and the strategic leadership programme developed by Te Papa National Services with NZQA and Victoria University. What other training, study and research projects might be developed? What role might Museums Aotearoa play? What about, for instance, an internship programme co-ordinated between museums and universities to provide graduates with a bridge to the sector?

#### Linking theory and practice in New Zealand

As part of this aim we decided to publish some recent graduate research from around the country that deserves a wider audience in this special issue



DANIEL MCKNIGHT, COLLECTION MANAGER, HAWKES BAY CULTURAL TRUST, DR. DAVID BUTTS, PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR MUSEUM AND HERITAGE STUDIES, SCHOOL OF MĀORI STUDIES, MASSEY UNIVERSITY, LIZ MILDON AND REBECCA WALSH BOTH INTERNAL STUDENTS 2005 DISCUSS TEXTILE STORAGE DURING A FIELD TRIP TO HAWKES BAY CULTURAL TRUST, SEPTEMBER 2005. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: NATALIE JONES (STUDENT)

of *Te Ara*. The work ranges in aim and depth from research undertaken for shorter essays to more detailed thesis research. The articles demonstrate the variety of institutions and processes that come under the ambit of 'museum and heritage studies' – these examples encompass provincial art galleries, a social history museum and a local heritage trail. In their analysis of particular cultural heritage problems and issues, the authors suggest that theory and practice are always linked. Athol McCredie, who holds an MA in Museums Studies from Massey University, provides an historical account of the emergence of professional art museums in the regions and their significant contribution to both contemporary New Zealand art and art gallery practice. As he argues

Given the ease with which the past can be forgotten [my article] seeks acknowledgement of our museological heritage and of the continuity it has with the present. In particular, it represents persisting themes and concerns to do with how galleries connect art with the public and the public with art.

He concludes that 'If there is something we can learn from the 1970s it is that there are advantages to *not* being well funded, as you then have to

generate and rely on goodwill.’ His story of ‘missionary zeal’ in the regions and the gains to be made is instructive for current interactions with artists, the art community, and audiences.

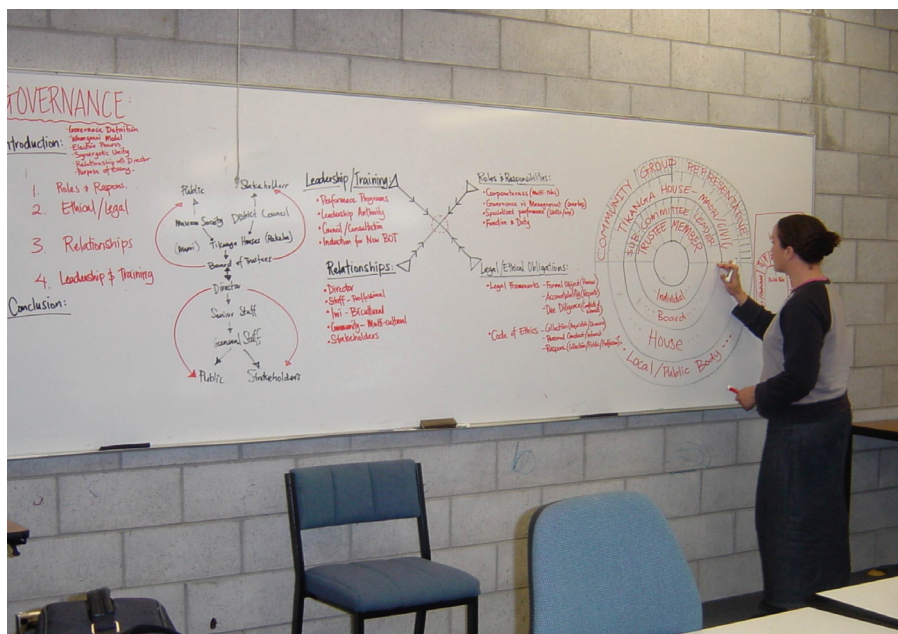
Anne Harlow wrote her evaluation of the shifting policies and practices of the Otago Settlers Museum, a long-standing Dunedin institution, as part of her course work for the Masters in Museum and Heritage Studies programme at Victoria University. Her article highlights ‘issues in traditional history museums in general, most obviously of the problems of maintaining relevance to, and interest from, the communities they serve’. In tracing the Museum’s transformation into an inclusive institution, which tells the stories of its varied peoples and communities, as well as the story of Dunedin and Otago’s development as a city and region, Harlow underlines the importance of context, relevance and the inclusion of the wider public for history museums.

Finally, Jacqui Remnant moves outside to the heritage landscape. She critically reflects on popular understandings of history and heritage through the process of researching and planning a heritage trail in Hamilton East, which was undertaken as an Honours dissertation in the History Department at The University of Waikato. She found the ‘opportunity to utilise my knowledge of the heritage sector and the theoretical issues involved in constructing and maintaining heritage sites in a practical exercise a rare privilege.’ Her article describes how, through this process, she ‘confronted and addressed many issues that arise within heritage representations of the past.’

### Conclusion

As Stephanie Gibson and the team developing *Ainaa* found, documenting institutional practices, including the exhibition development process and the ongoing community relationships, is vital for reflective museum practice. The value of research for museum practice lies in the opportunity for developing applied theory and theorised practice. The student research highlighted here shows that a balance can be struck between a focus on ideas on the one hand, and on the other the practicalities of collecting, exhibiting and other forms of heritage interpretation.

We believe the existing partnership between universities and the sector can be strengthened and deepened. Universities need to apply their teaching and learning to the workplaces where their students will end up and produce graduates who can work in the field in New Zealand today. There is great potential for further research that tests, applies and adapts international literature to local conditions. As the articles by Harlow and Remnant attest, museums and heritage sites, and the research based on them,



ERANA NGAKURU, MUSEUM STUDIES STUDENT AT MASSEY UNIVERSITY IN 2003, PREPARES A MIND MAP ABOUT GOVERNANCE FOLLOWING INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH MUSEUM TRUSTEES. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: SUSAN ABASA

are being developed in a distinctive post-colonial situation. In this country museum professionals are always dealing with our colonial heritage. It has profoundly shaped the character of New Zealand institutions, and also New Zealand society. In turn, the distinctive nature of our research and practice can make important interventions in the growing literature. As one scholar concludes:

A recognition of museum studies as training and education, research and practice, and as an area of enquiry made meaningful through participation and collaboration, enables us to recognise museum studies as an integral aspect of the current museum scene, and one which can make a valuable contribution to the shaping and placing of the museum in contemporary society (McLeod, 2001, p.58)

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SUMMATIVE EVALUATION – EXHIBITION PROJECT "KURATE@MASSEY" – EXHIBITION DEVELOPED BY INTERNAL CLASS MEMBERS CATHERINE HEHIR, REUBEN FRIEND AND LIZ MILDON USING WORKS BY KURA TE WARU REWIRI, FROM THE MASSEY UNIVERSITY ART COLLECTION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: SUSAN ABASA

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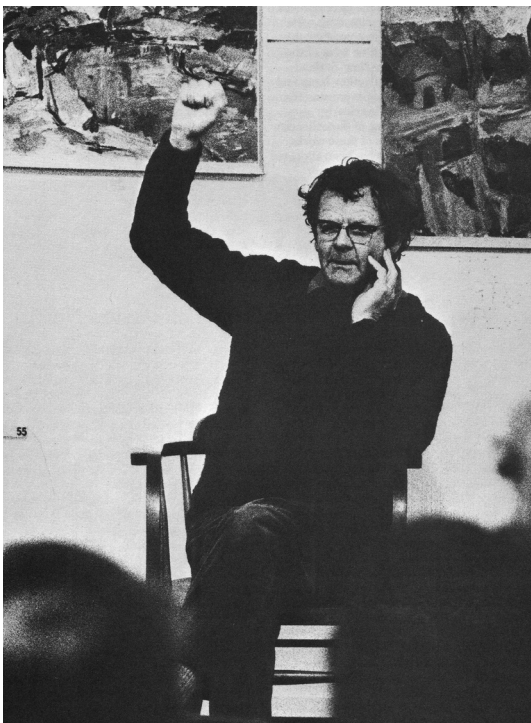
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# "With Missionary Zeal": Public Art Galleries in the 1970s

Athol McCredie traces the history of New Zealand's pioneering public art institutions.



TOSS WOOLASTON AT THE  
MANAWATU ART GALLERY  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:  
TE MANAWA

The development of art galleries and museums boomed in the 1970s and early '80s: 70% of the New Zealand public galleries that existed in 1980 had formed or been significantly revitalised in the previous decade. More than this, the 1970s mark a critical shift in how art galleries thought about their collections and their audiences. It was a time of transition when contemporary New Zealand art and audience engagement emerged as important

concerns. And, as is often the case, change came from the margins, from emerging or rejuvenated galleries in smaller centres such as New Plymouth, Lower Hutt, Wanganui, and Palmerston North. This article looks at the shifts in art gallery practice that occurred in the 1970s and how they came about.<sup>1</sup> Given the ease with which the past can be forgotten it seeks acknowledgement of our museological heritage and of the continuity it has with the present. In particular, it represents persisting themes and concerns to do with how galleries connect art with the public and the public with art.

## The persistence of nineteenth century prototypes

Prior to the 1970s public galleries in New Zealand were generally static places following the traditional 'temple on a hill' model of a museum.<sup>2</sup> They showed long-term collection hangs of mostly British academic work, broken only now and then by uninspiring touring exhibitions, and rarely engaged with New Zealand art of the day. In 1968 Peter Tomory reasoned that it was 'The lack of, or rather non-appointment of, professional staff [that had] preserved many of the country's galleries as unwitting museums of their nineteenth century prototypes' (1968, p.203). Gordon Brown later concurred: 'Reliance on voluntary assistance, amateur curators or staff of the handyman type adversely affected most galleries throughout the period [1940-1960],...such personnel [tending] to blunder along, frequently creating havoc' (1981, p.28).

It is certainly true that the first professional art gallery directors in New Zealand were not appointed until as late as the 1940s and early 1950s<sup>3</sup> and, except for the Auckland City Art Gallery, these appointments provided limited progress. The activity of the National Art Gallery, for example, remained minimal. Tomory quite reasonably claimed that 'Its collection can hardly be termed a national one... Inadequately staffed and financed by successive governments, its activity is barely measurable' (1968, p. 204). Typical public gallery offerings in the 1960s consisted of 'foreign relations' exhibitions organised by governments or their agencies, such as *Paintings by Japanese Children* (1966) and *Czechoslovak*

1 This article is derived from my 1999 MA Thesis, *Going public: New Zealand art museums in the 1970s*, Massey University. Uncredited quotations and information or views attributed to individuals are taken from this source.

2 For an account of art galleries and museums in New Zealand, see: Thomson, 1981. For the museum as a temple of art, see: Duncan, 1995; Pointon, 1994. For the recent international literature on art galleries, see:

McClellan, 2003.

3 The first professional director was Stewart MacLennan at the National Art Gallery in 1948. Dunedin Public Art Gallery and Auckland City Art Gallery followed shortly after, in 1951 and 1952 respectively, but Christchurch's Robert McDougall Art Gallery had to wait until 1960, when long-time volunteer curator W.S. Baverstock was appointed director.

*Graphic Art* (1961). As for contemporary New Zealand work, there appear to have been only three exhibitions, two of which were prints and the other was Auckland City Art Gallery's 1964 touring *Contemporary Painting in New Zealand*.

Conservative and slow moving as the National Art Gallery was, Christchurch's Robert McDougall Art Gallery was probably the champion in this regard. Indicators of dissatisfaction in the arts community include the well known *Pleasure garden* controversy of the late 1940s/early '50s in which the gallery turned down a gift by locals of a Frances Hodgkins painting, and the protests over an initial refusal of a Colin McCahon painting as the gift from the winners of the 1961 Hays Prize art competition. By 1968 the level of frustration had reached such a point that concerned citizens circulated a petition titled *A Desirable Public Gallery for Christchurch*.

The Dunedin Public Art Gallery closely matched the timidity and poor representation of New Zealand art at the McDougall, although it was better endowed than most, and had a strong collection of historical European art. The rest of the public gallery field comprised a scattering of inward-looking art society-dominated institutions in provincial towns.<sup>4</sup> The Auckland City Art Gallery, with its enthusiastic, active and charismatic first director Eric Westbrook and his successor Peter Tomory, proved the one exception to this dismal scene. The gallery held art lectures and classes, formed a Friends' organisation and established an education position. From the late 1950s it began taking on a national role: it published a series of catalogues on pioneer New Zealand artists; toured a series of group exhibitions on contemporary New Zealand art; and sponsored touring overseas exhibitions. All these activities brought New Zealand art and recent developments in international art to New Zealanders throughout the country in a way that had never occurred before. However, while they began significant



SELWYN MURU WITH HIS  
TE WHITI PAINTINGS AT  
THE DOWSE IN 1971  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:  
THE DOWSE MUSEUM

collecting of contemporary New Zealand art, the stated priority of the two directors was overseas (British and European) art that might provide instructive models of excellence for local audiences. Solo exhibitions by contemporary New Zealand artists were rare.<sup>5</sup>

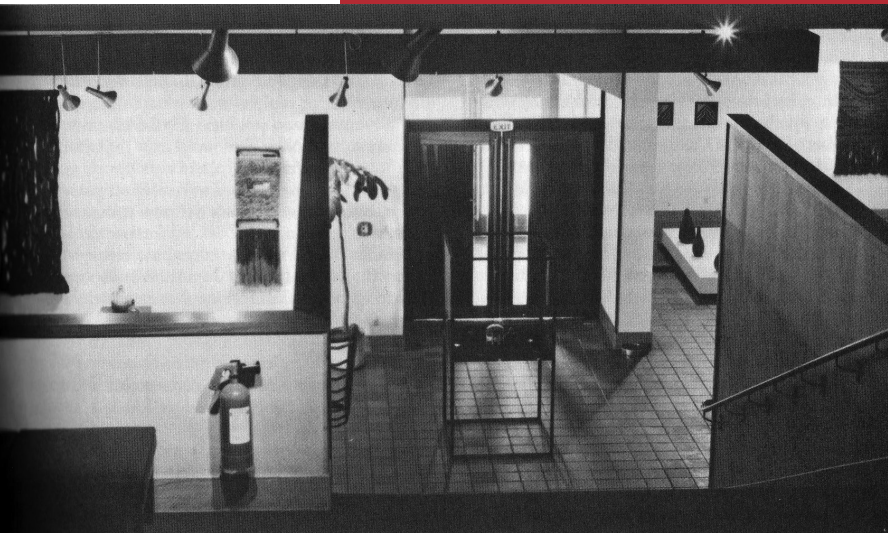
### The demand for new art galleries

Permanent displays of traditional British and European art may have satisfied the public in the 1920s, but expectations changed after the Second World War. A generation of baby boomers was coming of age by 1970. Well-educated professionals, aware of their own country's history through the introduction of New Zealand history courses at school and tertiary level, knowledgeable about the wider world through the introduction of television and jet travel, and unwilling to rush into

4 The Bishop Suter Art Gallery (Nelson, established 1898), the Sarjeant Gallery (Wanganui, 1919), Hawke's Bay Art Gallery and Museum (1936), Waikato Art Gallery (1947), Invercargill Public Art Gallery (1951 – later named the Anderson Park Art Gallery), Gisborne Art Gallery and Museum (1954), Aigantighe Art Gallery (Timaru, 1956), Palmerston North Art Gallery (1959), and Southland Centennial Museum and Art Gallery (1961) were the key institutions. There were other venues that served as de facto public galleries, especially with respect to showing New Zealand art, such as the CSA Gallery (Christchurch), the Centre Gallery (Wellington), and

some public and university libraries.

5 One could argue that the Auckland City Art Gallery peaked too early with respect to other New Zealand galleries. While it is likely that it provided a model for others to later follow, by the time they did so it had moved on again, concentrating on international blockbuster exhibitions in the 1970s. Its irrelevance to the rest of the gallery community is suggested by Jim Barr's comment that, 'Auckland set themselves way beyond us – I don't think they even came to our [art gallery directors'] meetings at first'.



THE INTERIOR OF THE GOVETT BREWSTER ART GALLERY IN THE 1970S  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: THE GOVETT BREWSTER ART GALLERY

marriage and the materialism of suburban life, they were interested in exploring the options of the present, rather than passively following the strictures of the past.

In the visual arts, there were huge changes. Art education boomed in schools and community classes. The two main art schools now sat firmly under the wing of universities. A significant number of New Zealand artists had studied or lived overseas (*and returned*). Dealer galleries sprang up, sporadically and short-lived in the 1950s and 60s, but firmly established in the 1970s. A series of new artistic concerns appeared as an infrastructure for art gradually emerged: contemporary art competitions were set up, the Auckland City Art Gallery had begun to construct a canon of New Zealand art through its exhibitions and small publications, and in 1969 and 1971 the first substantial surveys of New Zealand painting were published (Brown & Keith, 1969 and Docking, 1971). Historian Keith Sinclair noted that it seemed as though painting had replaced writing as the key medium of expression for the new generation of the sixties (1991, p.302).

By 1970 artistic activity was at an all time high and public interest was there to match, but there was little to marry the two. During the 1970s metropolitan galleries began to shift their focus to collecting New Zealand work. Acknowledging that their collections had been poorly managed, the galleries now gave high priority to professional conservation and improving collection documentation. Staff numbers generally increased and specialist positions were created. At the McDougall, for example, the positions of curator, education officer, exhibitions officer, and conservator were added to the director, assistant, secretary, and custodians in 1979. But the real activity occurred at

the provincial level. New art galleries were founded in New Plymouth (Govett-Brewster Art Gallery), Lower Hutt (Dowse Art Gallery), Rotorua, and Hastings. New buildings were erected for Palmerston North (Manawatu Art Gallery), Nelson, and Gisborne. The Sarjeant Gallery underwent radical staffing change and Waikato was restructured as a combined gallery/museum.

For many smaller galleries these developments were accompanied by the appointment of their first professional staff, prompting power struggles as they sought to break free from the amateur embrace of local art societies. These societies had played a significant role in developing and maintaining our public galleries: some institutions had begun life as an art society gallery (Manawatu, Suter, Waikato); others owed their formation to the lobbying of the local society (Dowse); yet others were dominated by art society members in their management (Sarjeant, National Art Gallery). According to Luit Bieringa, director of the Manawatu Art Gallery 1971-79, the art societies had 'kept the hearth warm', but by 1970 there was a feeling that it was time for paid directors to take charge.

### **Moving apace: exhibiting and collecting contemporary New Zealand art**

These new directors certainly got cracking. The Dowse, Manawatu and Govett-Brewster all held about 20 exhibitions a year in the early 1970s, probably similar numbers to those produced today by the same institutions, but usually with only a fraction of the staff and resources and little in the way of established collections to draw on. These were not just routine 'recent work' shows, but often the first public gallery exhibitions by some of New Zealand's most significant artists of the time. The Dowse, for example, produced exhibitions on Don Binney, Pat Hanly, Bill Sutton, Brent Wong, Tony Fomison, and Doris Lusk. The Govett-Brewster curated exhibitions on Don Driver and Colin McCahon, while the Manawatu Art Gallery staged exhibitions by Toss Woollaston and McCahon, as well as the first national survey of contemporary photography, *The Active Eye*. Many of these exhibitions were retrospectives with small publications that toured, and, ironically, were snapped up by the very institutions one might have

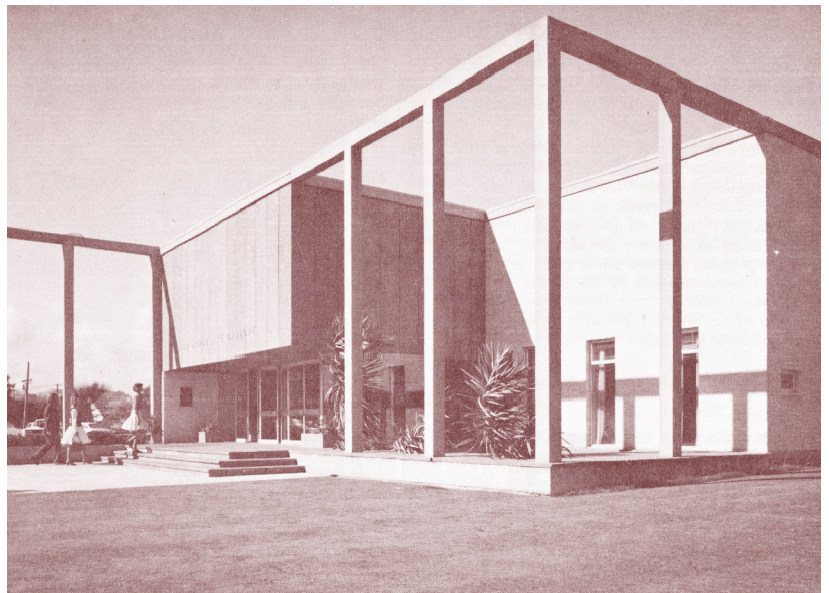


expected to initiate such shows: the metropolitan galleries. Former directors of the new galleries recall that this situation arose because there simply had not been any attention paid to an entire generation of mid-career artists by public galleries, and behind this backlog there were younger artists in turn who required attention.

It was this kind of art that necessitated a break with the art societies. Instead of being satisfied with continuing the established cycle of spring and autumn exhibitions of local members' work, the new galleries saw their focus in national terms. Audaciously, they believed their job was to both contribute to the development and understanding of contemporary New Zealand art in general, and to bring such art into their own communities. In doing this they wanted to engage with the new audiences that had developed for art over the previous decades. For example, John Maynard, founding director at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, stunned the gallery's own establishment committee, not to mention the public, by turning down a Peter McIntyre exhibition as the gallery's inaugural show. He selected instead an installation by the unknown 21 year old student, Leon Narbey. Installation art was almost a complete novelty in New Zealand at the time, Maynard himself having never seen one before, but Narbey's light and sound *Real Time* was an enormous success. It simultaneously drew huge crowds and polarised the community – as well as placing the gallery on the national art map.

Other galleries also engaged with new media. Manawatu organised and toured *Art in the Mail*, a huge international invitational exhibition of mail art. At the Dowse, successive directors David Millar and Jim Barr took some of the media popular at art society or community arts level and 'raised the game', showing work by leading New Zealand potters and fibre artists, setting the stage for the Dowse's later decorative arts focus.

The concentration on contemporary New Zealand art was expressed in collecting as well. Even today 1970s art remains one of the strongest features of gallery collections at places like Manawatu. At the Govett-Brewster, John Maynard developed a radical policy that limited acquisitions entirely to contemporary art and added a clause to give the



**DOWSE ART GALLERY MAIN ENTRANCE, C. 1976** ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: AGMANZ NEWS 7, (3) P. 42, WITH PERMISSION OF THE DOWSE.

option of deaccessioning any work after five years in order to retain the currency of the collection (though in practice the deaccessioning clause has rarely been activated).

The net effect of all this contemporary focus was that the small galleries were the place to see what was happening in New Zealand art. Of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, for example, Hamish Keith said in 1974:

Parochial loyalties are strained by the discovery that a relatively new art gallery in a city of 40,000, in a province previously famous only for a mountain and cows, can offer a more complete experience of contemporary New Zealand painting in a few hours than our own [Auckland City Art Gallery] can give in 12 months (cited in McCredie 1999, p.183).

### Engaging audiences

Alongside this contemporary focus, public galleries shifted from the passive 'take it or leave it' approach towards an active desire to get people in the door; to involve and educate them. Some exhibitions seem to have been designed purely as inviting extravaganzas of events and activities, with as many varieties of art that could fit within a concept. *Making an Impression* at the Dowse in 1979 is a good example. It was a basic collection show of prints, but this was disguised with a range of

activities and displays about printing. These included the high-profile 'Give us a hand', an attempt to cover an entire wall with visitors' hand prints; a fingerprinting display by Wellington police (with sessions in which visitors were fingerprinted); prints by school children; a tour of the Petone Print factory; a batik workshop with a Javanese batik artist; and a Gestetner offset printer operation in the exhibition that produced an edition of prints by well-known artists. The exhibition was enormously popular, with a claimed audience of 26,000 visitors. Such extensions and public programmes may not appear so remarkable today, but nothing like them had been seen before in this country.

Performing arts activities unrelated to exhibition programmes were also a feature of smaller galleries in the 1970s, possibly because the institutions represented the most visible site of culture within their communities. Concerts, poetry readings, dance performances, and film society screenings were commonly programmed, though not necessarily by the gallery itself. A group that originated with music teachers, calling itself the Gallery Performing Arts Group, formed around the Dowse, for example, but operated independently of it, giving concerts at the gallery and in schools.

At Manawatu some of Bieringa's activities were quite literally those of an art missionary. He would go out into the community in the company of teachers' college lecturer David Aitken and hold art workshops with children, especially in the poorer Palmerston North suburb of Awapuni. He recalls, 'I never saw anyone devour material like that – those kids had nothing at home'. The gallery also borrowed the arts council van for a period to take exhibitions out to smaller towns.

The advent of government employment schemes towards the end of the decade led to a rise in museum staffing, particularly for outreach programmes. For example, Ian Hunter, acting director at the National Gallery 1978-79, was deeply interested in public art and community participation and employed a small army of community arts workers, including twelve art students who taught art classes in community centres, a team of dancers who were used to liven up school visits by interpreting art works in dance, and musicians who

performed in parks. In a very short space of time an institution that risked becoming an historical curiosity was transformed into something approaching an activist arts centre, though this phase barely outlasted Hunter's term.

All these new public approaches of galleries were born out of a belief in the transformative power of art. Jim Barr's philosophy is particularly illustrative:

*I used to guarantee myself that I would spend at least two hours in the galleries every day. I always thought... that if I could be standing beside someone when they were having a spak attack in front of a McCahon then I could talk them out of it. All it took was your personal energy to win the day. It sounds a bit naive today, but I was a zealot, I believed in art education, I believed that people's lives would be better if they had access to art.*

### **Meshing the contemporary and the community**

Today it might seem that community involvement sits uneasily with the promotion of contemporary art. In the 1970s when galleries were struggling to establish themselves it was politically useful to do both: contemporary art established credentials at a national level while community involvement and popularity were convincing funding arguments locally. However, it was more than this. A desire to sell contemporary art to the public was a strong motive. As Jim Barr recalls:

*It was all evangelistic. I was basically trying to keep the community on-side enough so I could show them the best of what was around. My idea was that if people would look at things long enough they would accept them. So there was always a variety of work.*

Equally important, there was a basic philosophic alignment between contemporary art and community participation that reflected the values of the era. For the young, at least, the late 1960s and 1970s were a time of involvement and action. It was an age of protest, communes, 'happenings', open-air rock concerts, and self-expression: 'doing your own thing' with such creative forms as weaving, pottery, photography, or printmaking. Art was no longer

6 There is little writing on the social contexts for art in New Zealand in the 1970s. Some starting points are Green (1992) for an overview of art from the 1930s to 1980s; Oliver (1981) for the connections between society and culture; Kennedy (1994) for a perceptive commentary on US popular culture; and Rodgers-Smith's (1999) ambitious weaving of New Zealand art, culture and society.

## Lower Hutt Councillor elaborates on his urges

Lower Hutt City Councillor Chen Werry (right) tells Dowse Art Gallery director Mr Jim Barr how, with a few square metres of canvas, some paint and a brush, he could knock up a Colin McCahon-type painting in his lunch break.

Not surprisingly, Mr Barr did not accept that Cr Werry's effort would have the same artistic merit as, for instance, the McCahon painting, "Through The Wall Of Death" in the background.

Today's meeting in the gallery followed Cr Werry's criticism at a council meeting last night that the gallery now catered for "way-out tastes." (See earlier story page 17.)

Cr Werry said that when he went to an exhibition in the gallery he wanted "to smash everything up."

Elaborating on this latter comment today, Cr Werry said this was not meant to be taken literally. "I was just trying to explain the urge I get when looking at some of these paintings," he said, adding that he had no intention of acting on it.

This was a relief to Mr Barr. But, otherwise, there was little common ground between them.

An example of the spirited exchanges between the two today:

Cr Werry (referring to McCahon's paintings in particular and modern art in general): I would throw the lot away. I am perfectly certain we will not be looking at them in 200 years except perhaps as curiosities of a sick age.

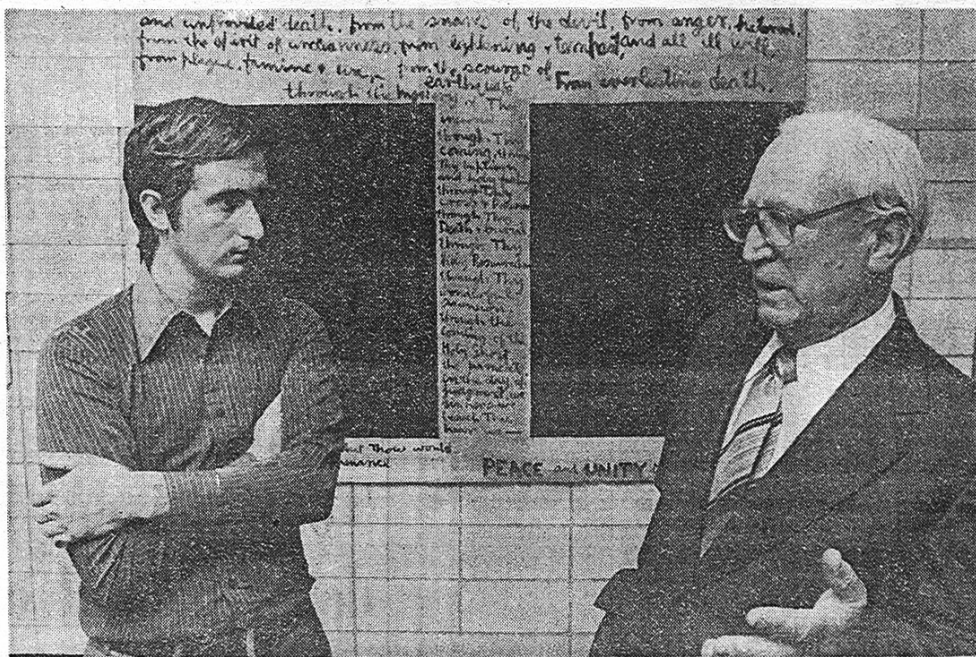
Mr Barr: He (McCahon) is a major New Zealand painter. That ("Through The Wall of Death") cost us \$3000.

Cr Werry: You have wasted your money.

Mr Barr: History will prove you wrong.

Cr Werry: Neither of us will live that long.

They finished up agreeing to disagree.



JIM BARR AND COUNCILLOR CHEN WERRY DEBATE THE MERITS OF COLIN MCCAHOON'S WORK IN FRONT OF HIS PAINTING THROUGH THE WALL OF DEATH. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: EVENING POST, 28 FEBRUARY, 1978.

something remote, produced by painters or sculptors on the other side of the world. Even high-art forms like painting gained social relevance.<sup>6</sup> Work by Michael Smither, Brent Wong and Michael Illingworth captured a sense of disquiet and unease many felt about progress and social relationships. Philip Clairmont epitomised the bohemian life-style of the alternative generation. Robin White and Don Binney demonstrated the continuing interest in New Zealand identity via depictions of its natural or vernacular landscape. And at the most avant-garde end, in post-object work, art was no longer considered an object to be viewed by a passive audience, but frequently required physical audience interaction. Arts council policy and funding reflected this shift. In the 1960s it concentrated on funding organisations for elite arts such as ballet, opera and classical music. By the 1970s it set up the community arts councils and began making more direct grants to artists.

While planning the Govett-Brewster, John Maynard articulated a vision for art and art galleries that expressed this new environment:

Art reflects its own age and this is the age in which we are living. Artists are leaders, not followers.... Up to now, art galleries have tended to institutionalise art. Some galleries in this country are dead [but] I find it hard to accept that art galleries should be mortuaries of past achievements. ...We want [the Govett-Brewster] to be alive; a place for everyone. Not for stuffed shirts – and not for stiff white ones, with bow ties, either (cited in McCredie 1999, p. 217).

### Risk-taking to force change

The new directors were not afraid to force home change. But just as the liberalism of the Kirk government in the early 1970s eventually found its backlash in the Muldoon era as an older generation felt change had gone too far and fast, so innovations in art galleries produced a reaction. Every community had its conservative city councillors like Chen Werry of the Hutt Valley who said that whenever he visited the Dowse he just wanted to 'smash everything up' and that the gallery catered 'for way-out tastes'. Jim Barr says his 'abiding memory was of going away to gallery director meetings at Palmerston North or somewhere and getting off the train to see billboards announcing that a councillor wanted to close the Dowse down'.

Rather than trying to smooth things over, some directors actually encouraged controversies in order to, as Maynard put it, 'create a bit of heat in order to shed some light'. So when the media asked to interview Werry at the Dowse following his inflammatory comments, Barr ensured it took place in front of a McCahon. Egged on by Barr, Werry claimed he could knock one up like it in his lunchtime and quickly found himself humiliated by painting a 'McCahon' on national television.



**SARJEANT GALLERY, WANGANUI, 1926.** ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: FRANK DENTON PHOTOGRAPH, COLLECTION OF SARJEANT GALLERY.

John Maynard, in particular, was a notoriously provocative character, once ordering the mayor of New Plymouth to ‘get the fuck out of my office’ after he had stormed over with a complaint about the gallery. But Maynard was not a person to let anyone stand in the way of his vision:

[The Govett-Brewster] was an extraordinary opportunity...and I didn't want it wasted. I was prepared to take risks because I was not looking for a long-term career, and I knew something big was at stake: I saw it as a long-term project that the kids being born that year would use and see as part of their community. I wanted to add something to the jigsaw of New Zealand.

I knew to start that I had to dispense with the ‘first ships’ people. You just couldn't take the [old guard] on board so you had to leave them behind. You couldn't take prisoners. You never gave away an inch or you would never get it back.

### The amateur-professional

Despite the new or revitalised buildings and the phenomenally busy programmes of the new galleries, staffing and resource levels were pitifully low. The Manawatu Art Gallery operated on a staff of one and a half, comprising a director and part-time secretary for most of the decade – plus the support of volunteer labour from the gallery society. It only gained an exhibitions officer in 1975 and a technician in 1978. The Dowse was in a similar situation, though without the volunteer labour.

At the same time, directors and staff at such galleries prided themselves on being a new generation of professionals who also retained the best qualities of amateurism – self-motivation, informality, and enthusiasm. Jim Barr, for example, says that it was personal motivation that drove things, since nothing happened unless he did it himself, and he never knew a crisis that could not

be solved by working through the night. At both the Sarjeant and Manawatu art galleries in the late 1970s there was a strong sense of a professional director surrounded by a small band of young helpers who would put their hands to any task. And although staff in other galleries, like the Govett-Brewster and Dowse, may have had professional-sounding titles, nearly all were learning on the job since there was little established art museum profession or any form of museological training in this country.

### Conclusion

New Zealand art galleries eventually gained the staff and funding they had been asking for in the 1970s. Professionalisation occurred: institutions appointed specialist staff from collection managers to marketing personnel; they developed written policies and procedures; and applied international museum standards. At the same time, society matured and specialised. Lifestyle became a marker of social distinction and community arts became distinct from the ‘professional arts’ now seen in public galleries. Art galleries also achieved some of their aims of the seventies – an audience for art was well established, names like McCahon, Woollaston and Hanly became commonly recognised, photography was accepted as an art form, and craft finally got a good name. No longer did it seem necessary to be quite so evangelical.

But some artists, curators and critics believe there has also been a loss (Leonard 2000; Skinner 2000, 2005; McDermott Miller 1998). Although a building boom in art galleries continues, they are unsure if this is really serving art and its audiences. New galleries seem mainly designed with an eye to the funds they can generate – as architectural spectacles or as mall-like destination experiences. If there is something we can learn from the 1970s it is that there are advantages to *not* being well funded, as you then have to generate and rely on goodwill. This requires co-operative interaction with artists, the art community, and audiences. The need to persuade such groups of your worth, rather than sponsors or other funders, arguably brings the greatest rewards. In this light, a final comment by Bieringa might serve as something to reflect on:

## Art galleries in New Zealand, 1969-80

### First Paid Directors

- 1970 Gisborne Museum & Arts Centre
- 1970 Waikato Art Gallery
- 1974 Sarjeant Gallery
- 1975 Bishop Suter Art Gallery

### New Institutions

- 1969 Wairarapa Arts Centre
- 1970 Govett-Brewster Art Gallery
- 1971 Dowse Art Gallery
- 1973 Waikato Art Museum (created from merger of gallery & museum)
- 1975 Hastings Cultural Centre
- 1977 Rotorua City Art Gallery
- 1980 Wellington City Art Gallery

### New Buildings

- 1977 Gisborne Museum & Arts Centre
- 1977 Manawatu Art Gallery
- 1979 Bishop Suter Art Gallery

You had to really believe in the stuff, and the role art had to play in society. If you are enthusiastic, the enthusiasm rubs off; if not, then you are only selling a product. You can easily tell the gallery people who like art and those who are just doing a job... With missionary zeal, God you can make mistakes, but I'd rather make exciting mistakes than dull ones.

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# From 'early settlerdom' to 'social history': Changing museology at the Otago Settlers Museum'

Her experience as a museum studies student led Anne Harlow to reconsider a childhood haunt

My memories of visiting the Otago Early Settlers Museum in Dunedin as a child in the 1980s are of fairly desperate boredom. With every obligatory school or family visit to learn about the British settlement of my city, the Museum's exhibits remained unchanged memorials: displays of clothing, cable-cars and ploughs; cabinets full of objects with their functions described on labels beside them; 'recreated' domestic settings; and in the Smith Gallery, walls covered floor to ceiling with grim, unsmiling black and white portraits. Despite my own British ancestry and family history of immigration to this country I could not understand how this group of exclusively Pakeha people of lifetimes ago, their stories and their possessions could in any way be interesting or relevant to my own experience of living in Dunedin in the present.

The Otago Settlers Museum and its history highlight issues in traditional history museums in general, most obviously that of the problems of maintaining relevance to, and interest from, the communities they serve. The relatively recent transformation of the Museum, which according to its website now 'continues to flourish as one of New Zealand's most significant social history museums' (<http://www.otago.settlers.museum>), illustrates the benefits of expanding a museum's focus and altering its approach to the representation of history and heritage.

Its initial focus and approach to the representation of history is reflected in literature that discusses the problems associated with the traditional history museum in general (Anderson, 1994; Kirshenblatt-

Gimblett, 1998; Walsh, 1992). As well as issues of funding and patronage, much discussion is based on the issues of context and relevance: the museums' separation of heritage and history from the context of everyday life; the decisions around the inclusion of aspects of history and groups of people; and the need to maintain the interest of the potential visiting public. According to Kevin Walsh, for example, the traditional museum and heritage industry has 'developed forms of representation that remove the past from the daily experiences of life. The representations are produced and left as static and passive objects' (Walsh, 1992, p.175). The basic display of objects or images of history without narrative and their presentation as souvenirs of the past, lead to static and unchanging factual exhibits with an emphasis on the individual object rather than its context. Walsh also asserts that in traditional heritage museums 'the past was a foreign country' (Walsh, 1992, p.148). The lack of a broader historical context in museums meant that there is little to connect the past to progress and the present, a result of their exclusion of plural histories, lack of narrative and narrow focus on a particular people or time. According to Gail Anderson,

the challenge is for museum leaders to be alert, questioning, and committed to the ongoing challenge of making museums a relevant and integral part of civic life (Anderson, 2004, p.7).

In this article I draw upon existing research about the Museum, particularly the work of Sean Brosnahan, and my own observations based on the literature to examine the shifting policies and practices at this significant heritage institution.

## The beginnings of the Museum

The Otago Early Settlers Museum's development reflects these issues of context and relevance. In 1898 the Otago Early Settlers Association was established as a social organisation to acknowledge and celebrate the first Pakeha settlers in the province. It began with a strictly elite membership. The term 'Early Settler' was officially applied exclusively to those people who had arrived in Otago from Britain between 1848 and the discovery of gold in 1861, as well as their descendants (Brosnahan, 1998, p.7). The Association undertook to collect and record material about the 'Early Settlers' and in 1908 the Museum was established to display these records, objects and portraits to the public as 'a monument in memory of the pioneers of Otago' (Brosnahan, 1998, p.24). In order to maintain and improve support of the Museum, as well as expand its collection, the Association extended its membership twice in the first few decades of the twentieth century. Firstly it included those who arrived before the end of 1864 in order to acknowledge the miners' role in the establishment and prosperity of the city. Later it allowed those who arrived before the end of 1868 to join, encompassing all immigrants to Otago in its first twenty years of European settlement (Brosnahan, 1998, pp. 22, 37). The Museum reached a peak of support and interest from the public of Otago with its Centennial Exhibition in 1948, visited by over 25,000 people in the five months that it was open. However, as Brosnahan points out:

with the Centennial...the Association had perhaps taken its advocacy of 'Early Settlerdom' as far as it could go. Without a new angle on the past, its future might well be a gradual but steady decline in fortunes (Brosnahan, 1998, p.58).

Two issues lay behind this lack of support from the Otago public. First, the 'sense of personal interconnectedness was inevitably dying out with the founding group of 'Early Settlers' and the 'Descendants' of the second generation' (Brosnahan, 1998, p.60). The content of the Museum was no longer pertinent to members of the Association or the general public of Otago, who either felt less connected to their 'Early Settler' ancestors, or who were immigrants, or their descendants, from



THE EXHIBITION 'KAI TAHU WHANUI KI OTAGO' AT THE OTAGO SETTLERS MUSEUM.  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: OTAGO SETTLERS MUSEUM

countries or times excluded by the membership rules. Secondly, after visitors had seen the 1948 Exhibition, there was nothing to draw them back for a return visit, as the content and style of the displays did not change. By the 1960s the Museum was still only collecting material that had some connection with the 'Early Settlers' and continuing to display it as it had done since its beginning. In focus, relevance and approach to the representation of history, the Otago Early Settlers Museum was 'stuck in a time warp while society, and the potential visiting public, changed around it' (Brosnahan, 1998, p.66).

## Towards a more inclusive institution

Once freed from school obligations I did not visit the Otago Early Settlers Museum again until the end of 2003. Renamed the Otago Settlers Museum, it had by then changed, to include stories of all the groups of settlers to Otago throughout its history, and to show the development of the city to the present. This spectacular difference from the original Museum became particularly apparent in the *On the Move: Road Transport in Otago* exhibition. There were vehicles my grandfather recognised from when he arrived in Dunedin in the 1940s, a make of car my father had owned as a student in the 1960s, and a parking meter that my brother and I recognised as one from the main street of Dunedin in the 1990s. The inclusion of the twentieth century instantly made the narrative of the Museum more relevant to us personally as Dunedin citizens.

The broadening of the Museum's focus, the inclusion of other peoples' stories, and the link from past to present with an emphasis on the city's development reflects in a practical way the ongoing discussions in much of the theoretical museum literature about heritage and history. In the



**THE OTAGO EARLY SETTLERS' MUSEUM, CIRCA 1948.**  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: OTAGO SETTLERS MUSEUM

introduction to the collection of essays *Reinventing the Museum*, for example, Gail Anderson discusses the issues facing museum staff, explaining that:

at the heart of the reinvention of the museum is the desire by museum professionals to position the museum to be relevant (Anderson, 2004, p.1).

Lisa Roberts also asserts that:

to acknowledge that meaning making lies at the heart of the museum enterprise and that narrative provides the means by which this activity is accomplished is to take the first step toward truly opening museums to multiple voices and views. No one wants to throw 'traditional' museums to the wind but rather to guide them toward more inclusive currents (Roberts, 1997, p.152).

The change in the Otago Early Settlers Museum was based on its need to attract visitors and to fulfil its role as an important social institution serving its community. The change began when Seddon Bennington was appointed as the first Director from 1978 to 1979, bringing 'youth, ideas, innovation and an academic background' to the Museum which until then had been staffed entirely by 'Early Settler' descended Association members (Brosnahan, 1998, p.74). Bennington encouraged change, hired professional staff including the Museum's first curator, and worked towards a greater engagement with the public. By 1984 this new approach culminated in five key proposals in the Museum's Special Committee's Report, including: 'the extension of the Museum's field into the present century concerning aspects of social history germane to this period'; recognition of the Museum as equal to The Dunedin Public Art Gallery and Otago Museum as 'a regular source of community and family entertainment with vast potential for the kind of leisure which belongs to the future'; and the consistent hiring of professional museum staff (Brosnahan, 1998, p.80).

The growing professionalism in museums and art galleries in New Zealand caused a significant shift in their organisation and focus from the 1970s (McCredie, 1999). Moreover, an increased interest in New Zealand's own social history and growing ideas

of cultural identity since the 1960s, as well as the increasing demand for the recognition and inclusion of all groups of people both nationally and within specific communities, influenced the representation of history in museums (Belich, 2001; Dalley and Labrum, 2000; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; Labrum, 2001; Olssen, 1984). In 1988 the vision became a reality. The Otago Early Settlers Museum was 'redefined as "the museum of social history for Otago", [and] the Museum's collections and programmes were suddenly opened up to include everyone and everything in the province's past'. It took a little while for this to be made a reality within the public space of the Museum, however (Brosnahan, 1998, p.83).

#### **The achievement of a social history museum**

By the mid-1990s exhibitions in the Museum showed how far it had come from its 'Early Settler' roots. For example, *Windows on a Chinese Past*, an exhibition created in partnership with the Chinese community, suggested that 'the museum was well on its way to its new role as the social history museum for *all* the people of Otago' (Brosnahan, 1998, p.88). In 1994 the opening of the permanent exhibition *Kai Tahu Whanui ki Otago*, the story of Māori in the 150 years since the sale of the Otago block to the New Zealand Company in 1844, showed clearly that the Otago Early Settlers Museum had abandoned its exclusive focus on the 'Early Settlers'. That the exhibition was created in consultation with local Māori meant the actual first settlers in Otago were finally included in the representation of the province's history.

The Museum's name was officially changed by the end of 1994. As Brosnahan notes: 'there was certainly a weight of tradition about the 'Early Settlers' title. It had long described perfectly what the Association, and its museum, was all about' (Brosnahan, 1998, p.93). However, by 2004 the Museum's aim was to celebrate:

all the peoples of Otago including indigenous Māori, the Chinese who came initially to work the goldfields in the 19th Century, and successive waves of migrant groups, including those from Lebanon, Poland, Holland, the Pacific Islands and many parts of Asia (<http://www.otago.settlers.museum/>)



It also undertook to display technological innovation in Otago, showing the changes in ordinary daily life throughout the region's history. The Otago Early Settlers Association is no longer involved directly in its operation but still remains a significant body behind the enhancement of its services and collections. The Museum website includes a link to the Otago Settlers Association and a membership form, declaring that now 'membership of the Otago Settlers Association is open to anyone who is interested in the Association and the Otago Settlers Museum' (<http://www.otago.settlers.museum/>).

The Museum has maintained its original 'Early Settler' material, including the crowd of portraits in the Smith Gallery. As Anderson acknowledges, in the process of 'reinvention' a museum must 'determine which aspects of its operation to retain and which new strategies to adopt, while charting a path that is realistic and appropriate' (2004, p.2). Rather than being overshadowed by the other stories, peoples and innovation in nearby exhibitions, or being discarded entirely, the story of these individual 'Early Settlers' is enhanced. It has become relevant once again in the context of the Museum and the display of the province's progress to the present. These individuals take their place within the overall historical narrative. The website notes this change, commenting that in 1908:

stern Presbyterian faces glowered down from rows of photographic portraits amidst artefacts of daily life from Otago's early days. Today, the Smith Gallery emphasises the importance of the Early Settlers in the story of Otago (<http://www.otago.settlers.museum/>).

The Otago Early Settlers Museum's exclusive focus, lack of narrative and static display were characteristic of traditional history museums internationally and in New Zealand. Its limitations led to the loss of interest from the public of Otago, the very people for whom it was established. The Museum's transformation into an institution inclusive of its varied peoples and communities and focussed on telling the story of Dunedin and Otago's development as a city and region, underlines the importance of context, relevance, and the inclusion of the wider public for history museums. The reconnection of a particular history with broader narratives and with the everyday life of the present

allows a heritage museum like the Otago Settlers Museum to continue to develop and take its audience with it.

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# Pioneering History: Learning from the Hamilton East Heritage Trail Project

Jacqui Remnant engages in action research in a community development project.

'A little corner of Hamilton has turned into a battleground between the forces of development and the forces of preservation.' (Edwards, 2003, p.26) More than two years after Hayes Paddock, the city's first state housing area in Hamilton East, came to the attention of the heritage sector, it is again at the forefront of public debate in the community. Newfound support from Mike Ward, Arts, Culture and Heritage spokesman for the Green Party, and Hamilton City Mayor Michael Redman, has seen the issue that many believed had been closed, regain momentum.<sup>1</sup> As residents and supporters push to create a heritage precinct to preserve over 225 buildings in their original setting, the reactive mode of many heritage projects is clear. As soon as a historic site or building is threatened with development, there is a sudden rush to protect it. But what makes a heritage site? Why is there a determination to protect sites of the past for the future? How do these heritage sites enrich public appreciation for, and understanding of, events and ideas of the past?

I wrestled with these questions in my analysis of attempts to honour and interpret a local example of heritage: the proposed Hamilton East heritage trail.<sup>2</sup> I found that I was 'pioneering history' in a way. This research was a different way of looking at the impact of heritage on people's understanding of the past. There has been little detailed analysis of heritage trails in New Zealand, unlike the more

reflective and engaged literature internationally (Cheung, 1999; Krim, 2005). Most analyses in New Zealand have focused on current issues such as funding, management, regulation and planning processes (Trapeznik, 2000).

In addition, while undertaking the research, I took on the role of researcher in a voluntary capacity for the heritage trail project. Sponsored by The Hamilton East Community Development Group, now known as the Hamilton East Community Development Trust, this body evolved from the Steele Park Working Group, which had originally been established to work on issues of safety in Steele Park, Hamilton East. Steele Park has been called the cradle, or birthplace, of Hamilton, because the first church, school and businesses were built nearby. The park is ringed by oak trees planted for the soldier settlers. This area is also known as Te Nihinihi and has historical significance to Ngati Wairere as sacred Māori burial grounds are located in the vicinity.

The intention behind this trail was to encourage recognition of the diverse past of Hamilton East. With numerous historic residential and commercial buildings, it has long been recognised as one of the oldest suburbs in the city. As a member of the community group, I saw how an understanding of history and heritage are integral for community development. An initial examination of the different understandings of heritage, and what needs to be considered when creating heritage trails, uncovered a multitude of other issues. These include the tensions between the social, cultural and economic benefits of this project; consideration of heritage beyond the built environment; and reflection about whose history to represent.

1 A public meeting was held at St John's Church Hall in Hamilton East in July 2005. Hayes Paddock receives a prominent mention in Schrader (2005).

2 I completed this research as a History Honours student at the University of Waikato in 2004, as part of my HIST590 directed study or dissertation (Remnant 2004).

## Heritage and public understanding of the past

The extent to which heritage sites shape historical understanding is complicated by the awareness that heritage is a social construct. There has been an increased consciousness in recent studies of the way that history is created by those who write it, and it is the same with heritage sites. When reading narratives of the past, the knowledge that history is much more than 'facts about the past' needs to be taken into consideration. This is evident in publications as diverse as history books, documentaries, and pamphlets or signposts at historic sites. Heritage sites are as much a construction of ideas as they are a representation of the past: they are 'a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p.149). Every time a new representation of the past is created it causes people to reconsider what they 'knew' about the past.

Understandings of heritage differ greatly between academics and the public (Corsane, 2005; Lowenthal, 1996; Samuel, 1994). Being aware of the impact heritage sites can have on the perceptions of history for those that draw on it, is essential in creating heritage trails. For this reason, those that understand the constructed nature of heritage need to take a more active role in heritage projects. More emphasis needs to be placed on establishing what 'knowledge' people take with them after they visit heritage sites (McLean, 2000). Have they learnt something new, has it made them consider an historical event in a new light, or has it just confirmed their existing assumptions?

## Whose history, and why? Heritage beyond the built environment

In many cases heritage is 'history made visitable' (Dicks, 2003, p.134). This 'visitability' helps to explain why heritage has come to play a major role in tourism, both in New Zealand and internationally. The desire to establish heritage-based tourism is explained by Gavin McLean as New Zealand towns and cities 'scrambling to use heritage as a point of differentiation' (McLean, 2001, p.169). Towns such as Napier and Oamaru have been successful in this and have benefited financially from their heritage status. But will this be reflected in Hamilton East, and if so, is this actually what is desired by the

community? The community group has demonstrated a belief that benefits and spin-offs should be to all members of the community, not just the retail sector. As a recent study of heritage perceptions and expectations concluded, 'the economic benefits of heritage should only be sought if they benefit conservation and are captured by local people' (Warren and Ashton, 2000, p.25). With these considerations uppermost, the community group held a public meeting to discuss the heritage



**BEALE COTTAGE,  
HAMILTON EAST**  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:  
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trail in September 2004. A letter was sent to 36 interest groups and organisations, and around 15 people attended the meeting.

When questioned about which sites to include in the heritage trail, attendees at the public meeting immediately suggested buildings, in particular Beale Cottage and Greenslade House. These are both registered as Category One buildings by the Historic Places Trust. In 1882, local Doctor Bernard Charles Beale found that both his medical practice and his family was expanding. To allow for this growth in children and patients, he built Beale Cottage. Most recently, the cottage was home to the Forrest family who lived there for 70 years. The Hamilton City Council purchased the cottage in 1990 and the property was declared an historic reserve in 1994. It is currently managed and maintained by the Waikato Museum of Art & History and City Parks, who have begun restoration of the garden. Greenslade House is a grand private home on the banks of the Waikato River. Those present also nominated various churches, commercial premises and school buildings.



**THE ENTRANCE TO STEELE PARK, HAMILTON EAST, SHOWING EXISTING HERITAGE INTERPRETATION**  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: CONAL MCCARTHY

While the built environment plays a considerable role in heritage, the historical experiences and events that occurred within buildings is as significant as their aesthetic value.

In an attempt to look beyond the buildings themselves in this instance, the heritage trail interpretation emphasises the roles played in the development of the city by the former owners of these properties, Dr Beale and Henry Greenslade, the local MP. By recounting the people, events and ideas of the past, the trail aims to add a richer texture and historical knowledge to these sites beyond the physical fabric.

The call to preserve Hayes Paddock recognises its significance as a state housing precinct, which includes the role that state housing played in creating communities. Like other state housing projects, these houses were designed with room for a shed and vegetable garden, and a lawn for children to play on. (Edwards, 2003: p.27) This simple idea helped to create a community feeling that continues today. This is something which residents are as keen to preserve as the buildings themselves. It is the role that Hayes Paddock played in creating the community that will be emphasised in the heritage trail, rather than the buildings. In focussing on this aspect, the trail will reflect the idea that 'landscapes allow for the telling of the social, cultural and environmental history of places.' (Warren-Findley, 2001, p.19) Because heritage trail sites are usually linked purely by location, they

3 Nga Mana Toopu o Kirikiriroa (NaMTOK) is made up of representatives from different iwi and hapu in the area.

can demonstrate change over time and they allow the telling of many stories for each site.

In addition to an overwhelming focus on the built environment, there is continuing concern that only the positive side of the past is presented in heritage trails. Often a false sense of nostalgia is the consequence. For example, the 2003 Settler's Day ignored the harsh realities of the past and focused on creating an artificial image of a quaint village. But the past is not as simple as that. To take one example, there is still animosity over the confiscation of land from local iwi. Following this, the early settler period was difficult and many were forced to walk off their land. There is little doubt that many of the dreams held by the militia settlers and local iwi were crushed by the settlement process, and this tells us much about the people that stayed. In order to have a compelling impact on public understandings of the past, heritage trails need to be inclusive – providing historical readings from the positive to the painful, and in the process demonstrating an awareness of the multi-faceted and layered nature of the past (Warren-Findlay, 2001).

There are numerous examples of change over time in this suburb. Looking beyond the built environment, the role natural landscapes played in Hamilton East can be seen in Steele Park. Known as Te Nihinihi by early Māori, it was used as a temporary camp and for hangi prior to European settlement. Called Sydney Square as an acknowledgement of the Australian origins of many of the militia settlers, it was later renamed in honour of Captain William Steele of the fourth Waikato Militia. Since the early militia settlement, it has been used for social gatherings such as picnics and market days and, from 1865, sporting events including cricket have been avidly watched there. These multiple uses show the many roles physical environments can play in creating communities.

Another concern for the community group was appropriate representation for Māori sites included in the trail, including respect for urupa. The community group gives ongoing support to local iwi in their project for recognition of significant Māori sites along the Waikato riverbank (Hamilton City Council and Nga Mana Toopu o Kirikiriroa, 2003).<sup>3</sup> This relationship illustrates how the project

encompasses different sectors of the community. It recognises that the past affects these groups in distinct ways. Iwi are consulted as to how these sites should be represented.

### **Heritage trails as a product of the past, and a resource for the future**

Heritage trails are often used by communities as a way of distinguishing themselves from those around them, and they give people an opportunity to investigate and gain knowledge of their past. As well as acknowledging significant people, events and places in history, heritage trails can be utilised to identify the social, cultural and environmental history of a community. They also encourage learning about the past and can be a proactive way of promoting heritage protection.

Issues arose when it became obvious that the various stakeholders in the Hamilton East trail had different goals. Heritage has been described as 'the part of the past which we select for the present for contemporary purposes, be they economic, cultural, political or social', and this was certainly the case in this instance (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge, 2005, p.29). The difficulty faced in a community-based project such as the Hamilton East heritage trail is how to satisfy the objectives of the different stakeholders.

Many of those that attended the public meeting voiced the idea that 'we must link the heritage trail to the local economy'. Furthermore, this meeting took place just before the local government elections, and there were obvious attempts by local council candidates to utilise this project for their own political goals.<sup>4</sup> However, the community group sees the trail as an asset for social and cultural benefit, in that it will encourage a deeper understanding of how the community came to be what it is today.

Currently the heritage trail pamphlet is in its final stages of production and text and illustrations for the signage are being developed. The signage will allow for elaboration of explanations and illustrations as space will not be at such a premium

as it is in the pamphlet. Unfortunately my role in this project was interrupted when I moved to Wellington for employment. The allocation of funding has always been a concern. As the project gained momentum, however, it received much needed monies from a variety of sources. These included two \$5000 grants from the Wel Energy and SkyCity Trusts. Recently a \$10,000 grant from the Hamilton City Council has demonstrated a significant change in attitude since the 2004 local elections. This money will be used to produce the heritage trail pamphlet and signs.

### **Bringing together theory and practice**

This project ensured that different sectors of the community were talking about what is significant heritage in their area. Discussion about what sites to recognise, how to do so and why they should be highlighted, has resulted in a deeper understanding of how the community developed and what goals it has for the future. I found this opportunity to utilise my knowledge of the heritage sector and the theoretical issues involved in constructing and



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<sup>4</sup> On a positive note, many of these councillors have continued to be heavily involved in Hamilton East developments and have gone on to become trustees in the Hamilton East Community Development Trust that was recently formed.

maintaining heritage sites in a practical exercise a rare privilege. In analysing the process of creating a heritage trail, I confronted and addressed many issues that arise within heritage representations of the past. As the researcher and member of the community group, I was forced to address a variety of concerns including whose history to represent, how, and most critically, why.

Each heritage site feeds into the national narrative and there needs to be more consideration of the way community heritage projects influence public understandings of New Zealand's past. Attempts to protect historic heritage would benefit from more reflection about why we are so determined to save that which is seen to represent 'the past'. In assigning protection, and therefore significance, to a site, the historical importance as much as aesthetic value are equally important. Our ongoing analysis of these representations should recognise our emphasis of some stories and our ignorance of others. Ensuring that the multi-layered nature of the past is presented, thereby allowing different interpretations of the past, will lead to more robust understandings that are relevant to local communities and also have wider resonance.

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# Recent claims for more moa and huge errors in museum identifications – cutting through the spin

True to the origins of museums' role in the natural sciences, Paul Scofield, Trevor Worthy, Richard Holdaway, Michael Bunce, Alan Cooper and Alan Tennyson demonstrate that museum-based research still actively contributes to taxonomic debate.

In early June 2005, the media made much of the discovery of several “new” moa species. The blaze of publicity arose from a paper that had just been published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA by Baker et al. (2005). As their results were made out to radically alter the way we deal with moa material and advocated extensive DNA sampling because, in their view, morphological analysis is fundamentally flawed, it is worth sifting through the spin to see just what the claims are based on.

## Rules of the name

Are there more moa? Baker et al. (2005) reported mitochondrial lineages that may or may not reflect species. In their own words, “a synthesis of bone characters, DNA sequence variation, and possibly carbon dating will help resolve the issue”. However, we note that David Lambert was quite happy to imply that these lineages equated with species – and in fact published a paper on genetic “bar-coding” of moa which implied that genetic distances were sufficient to differentiate moa species. (Lambert et al 2005) In Baker et al (2005), the authors did not, in fact, erect any new species of moa. They would have had great difficulty in doing that validly, in accordance with the strict rules of nomenclature, on the basis of mitochondrial lineages, because there are about 60 valid names for moa; of these, 10 are now considered to represent the biological species that formerly existed. However, any new lineage for which a name is proposed would need to be compared directly with the DNA haplotype of all relevant type specimens of the other 50 valid nominal taxa to determine whether it was, in fact, a “new” moa species. They made no attempt to do

this and so, despite the publicity, the number of moa species remains at 10.

## Writing wrongs?

Baker et al (2005) claimed that at least 33.6% of specimens were incorrectly classified in museums. This claim is spurious and seems to be based on a lack of understanding of the nomenclatural and taxonomic processes. In their Table 2 (specimens used in their analysis), we find 130 specimens listed, not 125 as they state (Baker et al. 2005: 8258), but 125 of these did have attributed museum identifications. Of these, they have incorrectly listed the identity of nearly all *Dinornis* specimens. In 2003, Bunce et al. published a paper revising the taxonomy and nomenclature of *Dinornis*, with the result that *Dinornis struthoides* and *D. giganteus* were made synonyms of *Dinornis novaezealandiae* Owen, AND that all *Dinornis* in the North Island were referred to the taxon *Dinornis novaezealandiae*, and all those in the South Island, to the taxon *Dinornis robustus*. All taxonomists realise and accept that museum specimens will carry on their label the name they were first identified with, and that they will not necessarily have labels reflecting current synonymies: it is up to taxonomists working on that group to know the current synonymies. If workers lack such basic skills, it would be normal procedure to check with the institutions to ensure that they had correctly listed the identities of the specimens they were using. Thus, if the authors had asked the relevant specialist in the museum for the identification of these specimens, they would have been given identifications based on the latest taxonomic work of Bunce et al. (2003),



THIS CRESTED MOA FEMUR FROM GREYMOUTH IS SUFFICIENTLY WELL-PRESERVED FOR ANCIENT DNA TO BE EXTRACTED. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: CANTERBURY MUSEUM

which was supported by Worthy et al. (2004, 2005).

The words of Baker et al. (2005) on the genus *Euryapteryx* are revealing. "In *Euryapteryx geranoides*, the birds from Otago and South

Canterbury were grouped together.....and most of the birds from the far north of the North Island are separated into yet another clade...The latter were previously assigned to *Euryapteryx curtus*". From this statement it is evident that they consider *E. curtus* is referable to *E. geranoides*, which is nomenclatural nonsense because *E. curtus* has priority over *E. geranoides*, and thus would be the valid name if both populations were to be referred to a single taxon. Luckily they did not make a formal statement of synonymy, because if it reflected the statement quoted, it would have been invalid.

A further look at their listed incorrect classifications shows that one of the remaining examples is a simple error on their part. CMAv21330 is listed in the CM catalogue as *Euryapteryx gravis*, and it was identified and published as *Euryapteryx geranoides*, in accordance with the synonymy of the time, by Worthy & Holdaway (1994). It has never been claimed to be *Pachyornis australis*. Anything labelled as *E. gravis* should at the moment be assumed to be included in the species *E. geranoides*, in accordance with current synonymy.

#### Clarifying classificatory processes

With this correction, it appears that only 5 specimens of 125 specimens sampled from museums were incorrectly assigned (4.0%). Of these misidentifications, two were made by inexperienced staff and three of the errors involve the femora and tarsometatarsi of *Euryapteryx geranoides*, *Emeus crassus* and *Pachyornis elephantopus* which are well known to be difficult to separate, even for experienced observers (Worthy & Holdaway 2002). In the closing sentence of the paper the authors admit to the fact that "confusing morphological variation has plagued the study of moa over the past 150 years". So it should not have come as a great surprise to them that a small number of specimens might not have correct (and up-to-date) labels.

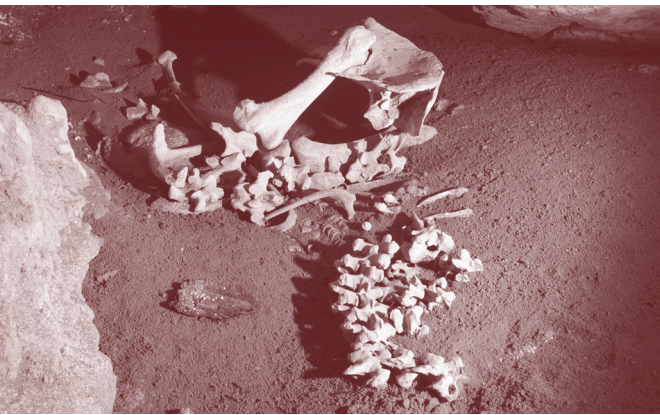
Given the much lower extent of misidentification based on morphology than is claimed by Baker et al., we doubt their claim that DNA identification is the only way to correctly assign moa specimens to taxa. This is especially so because the great majority of moa bones are too poorly preserved for DNA analysis. We note that they state they obtained DNA from 125 (actually they list 130) from over 230 samples made available to them. We can assume that these 230 represent some of the specimens that were most suited for their purpose from among the many thousands of moa bones in New Zealand museums, and hence that the recovery rate for DNA under good conditions hovers just over 50%, and must be lower if all material is considered.

In their haste to present a case for DNA identification as being superior to a morphological methodology in identification of moa fossils, Baker et al. have used a range of incorrect data and exhibited little understanding of nomenclatural and taxonomic procedures and requirements. Ultimately, and contrary to the impression conveyed to the media, moa systematics and nomenclature remain unaffected by their results, and morphological analysis is still the framework on which even molecular techniques firmly rest. We advocate that to contribute something meaningful to moa biology it is necessary to take an integrative approach which combines isotope, morphological, ecological as well as molecular data.

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PERFECTLY PRESERVED SPECIMENS SUCH AS THIS LITTLE BUSH MOA FROM A CAVE IN SOUTHLAND ENABLE DNA TO BE EXTRACTED. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: CANTERBURY MUSEUM

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Paul Scofield is curator of Vertebrate Zoology at Canterbury Museum.

Trevor Worthy is one of New Zealand's leading paleo-ecologists. Recent changes to Government funding have seen him leave New Zealand and take

his skills elsewhere. He is now a PhD candidate at University of Adelaide, South Australia, Australia.

Richard Holdaway is a palaeo-ecologist with Palaecol Research in Christchurch. His research is funded through the NZ government's Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. Along with Trevor he is the author of *The lost world of the moa* (2002), the definitive reference work on New Zealand's pre-human ecosystem.

Michael Bunce, originally from Christchurch, is a Post-Doctoral fellow at McMaster University, Ontario, Canada. He was awarded his DPhil based on work he did on Ancient DNA at Oxford University.

Alan Cooper, originally from Nelson and formerly head of the Ancient Biomolecule Centre at Oxford University, is now a Federation Fellow at University of Adelaide, South Australia, Australia and has recently established the Australian Centre for Ancient DNA in Adelaide

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# What is (not) an Internship?

Ashley Remer examines the Internship Question

Originally, I set out to paint a picture of the state of internships in New Zealand; however, those intentions were eclipsed as the same issue kept arising – everyone seems to have a different idea of what an internship is supposed to be. Although frequently noted, researched and discussed, our museum and art gallery sector as a whole needs more trained professionals, yet there remains resistance to the concept of internships. The *“New Vision”*, a 1998 review of New Zealand’s visual arts infrastructure, identified the need for internship development by Creative New Zealand, Te Papa and at the individual museum level. So while the word “intern” has been out there, perhaps confusion over what it actually means has prevented New Zealand museums from embracing this model.

## The Usual Suspects

At the moment, if we look around for a definition of ‘internship’, we find several examples. Among them is the recent Creative New Zealand/Blumhardt Trust Internship for Decorative Arts at the Dowse, where some of the required skills for applying for this internship include both experience and publishing within the field. Looking to a different quarter, we find the Clark Collection/Creative New Zealand Scholarship, in which a mid-career professional combines an intensive course with short-term placements described as internships. These differ markedly. I would like to propose a few definitions to help clearly set out the expectations and obligations of both museums and students. These are presented in Table 1.

## Mis/Preconceptions

These are but a few of the recurring comments I have recorded during my time in the field.

- **Interns are volunteers.**

As interns are usually unpaid, they may look like volunteers, but the expectations of an internship

include goals and results above and beyond those expected of volunteers. Interns are usually engaged in an academic programme with predetermined outcomes of both acquiring practical experience on their project and enhancing the possibility of paid employment.

- **Interns take up too much of your time, time that you don’t have.**

If no museum position exists to specifically manage interns, much of the responsibility falls on over-stretched staff whose job may not include such duties. However, with careful preparation and effective project management, the intern should function as part of the staff you already have.

- **Interns photocopy.**

Yes, interns can photocopy, but they can also do research, write press releases, work on catalogues, organise events, teach classes and lead tours, amongst many other things. If you give an intern (or an employee, for that matter) challenging work, they will usually rise to the occasion.

- **Interns Come From Canada**

For the past four years, New Zealand has hosted students from Canada’s Young Professionals International programme (YPI). This highly successful programme has been administered by the Canadian Museums Association and funded by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, showing a clear commitment to the employment needs of youth and the museum sector. Programme goals include building relationships, exposing young people to new diverse cultures and ideas in museology and giving them an edge in an already fiercely competitive industry.

**Table 1: Definitions of various training terms which may occur in the context of museums**

Term	Definition	Comment
Internship	A diverse, discrete and didactic, museum-based project undertaken by a currently enrolled or recently graduated student, who is committed to regular working hours over several months and treated as staff.	Term commonly used in North America, especially useful for internet searching. Usually unpaid, however, some institutions offer stipends. Academic credit can be arranged.
Mid-career development	A mid-career professional taking time out of his/her own job to work closely with scholars/professionals to acquire new or updated knowledge and skills.	e.g. Clark Collection/Creative New Zealand Scholarship; He Kāhui Kākākura Strategic Leadership Programme (offered through VUW and Te Papa National Services)
Continuing professional development (CPD) (including secondment and mentoring)	Persons already working in the field seeking training to acquire new or updated skills at any stage in their career	This upskilling often includes generic skills such as financial management, IT, project management, etc.
Work experience or work placement	Same as internship, but for a shorter period	Term more commonly used in the UK and Europe
Fellowship	A highly competitive placement with a substantial cash award to work on a prestigious project	e.g. The CRNZ/Blumhardt award, Smithsonian Fellowships
Apprenticeship	Traditionally long-term employment (up to 5 years) as trainee, usually with structured in-service training, designed for school leavers, entering a trade.	The recently revived NZ Modern Apprenticeship scheme does not (yet) extend to museums
Mentoring	An experienced manager, usually in another institution or industry, provides on-going regular coaching	Often arranged for those new to management
Secondment	Opportunity to spend a period working in another department, institution or industry	May be part of an exchange; Common in central government

So why are more NZ museums not developing internships for their own NZ students?

**Conundrum**

Foreign students can come to New Zealand to gain knowledge and work experience, either on their own or with an organisation like the Canadian Museum Association. New Zealanders can go overseas for study and train and get experience at foreign museums. Creative NZ will fund internships

(read: professional development, mentoring, etc.-not for students) here or overseas.

For many NZ students, going abroad for an unpaid internship is not realistic. Students need their local museums to offer the same types of opportunities that are available overseas.

For those graduates who do go abroad for their internships, they are less likely to return here when they are finished. And if/when they do, they may be

overqualified and disheartened by an old fashioned system with few available positions.

### The Academy

I have chosen not to dissect the three Museum Studies programmes offered at the tertiary level in New Zealand. All have different styles and purposes, so comparing each one's virtues and failings would be neither valid nor constructive. Instead, I will describe what was required of this American for her internship. Museum Studies at my university is a certificate only, which must be taken in conjunction with a Master's degree. Required for the certificate are two core papers, two elective papers and an internship. To receive academic credit, a student must complete 320 unpaid hours, keep a daily journal, give both a written report and presentation as well as receive a full evaluation by the host museum.

### The Factory

One of the most important shifts in thinking about internships, perhaps the thing that keeps many institutions from taking them on, is management. Creating a position to deal with interns, both the paperwork involved as well as the daily management, in the form of either an Intern Coordinator or a dedicated staff person, is essential. Having a position in charge of organising the intern programmes, liaising with departments and arranging extra training will relieve stress on other staff and alleviate confusion over responsibilities. Managing interns within a museum's education department is highly recommended; it is an educational exercise after all. More cooperation between museums and universities to develop and publicise these opportunities is crucial.

### Future Fantastic

While there are several museums developing their own internships, I would like to put an idea on the table for discussion – a National Internship Scheme, centrally funded and managed, for example, by Museums Aotearoa and/or National Services. It would be a significant stand to establish criteria and guidelines and create a high level of standards for the industry to follow, as well as providing a service for the smaller museums that may never have the resources to recruit for themselves. What benefits one can benefit all. As

we know, museums are buildings, but they are also people who must be trained to fulfill their missions and protect their collections, educate their audiences and become the extraordinary professionals who will inspire the next generation.

#### Acknowledgement

The author wishes to thank Dawn Roach of the Canadian Museums Association, Dr David Butts of Massey University and all the students she spoke with who didn't know they were being interviewed.

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An effective method of letting students know you have an internship available is on the web. Students today are totally "web savvy" – researching institutions and looking for internships/jobs on the net. If your museum/gallery has a website (which it should), use it.

Ashley Remer undertook an internship at the Auckland War Memorial Museum as a part of her Arts Administration Masters programme at Florida State University, and is now a NZ resident. During a brief stint in Wellington, she was the Membership Officer for Museums Aotearoa and continues to work with MA as the website manager.

# Careering into the future: steps towards unit standards

Phillipa Tocker reports positive progress on sector-wide training initiatives.

Museum people work very hard. In discussions with staff in museums and galleries during my first two months at Museums Aotearoa, I have been overwhelmed by their passion and resourcefulness. I had the opportunity to attend the feedback sessions held recently in Auckland, Rotorua, Wellington, Dunedin and Christchurch as part of the triennial review of Te Papa's National Services Te Paerangi. Joining these fora, I was able to talk with people from some of the diverse organisations that make up our museum sector. Some came to it with tertiary academic qualifications which were then augmented and tested by on the job experience. Some came from other fields such as teaching or library and archive work. Some brought skills learned in tourism or business. And some came without formal training – just with the knowledge that they had something to contribute.

## Training in the museum workplace

Aside from universal issues around funding, one of the main themes to come out of the discussions was the need for continuing support and training. For some this is professional development, for others it is internships to bridge the gap between education

and experience. Some people need targeted workshops to develop key skills. And there are many, often volunteers or those who have come into museums with few skills or from other careers, who would like a staged programme of study to build their understanding and capabilities of what it means to work productively in the museum sector.

The need to promote best practice through training, standards and guidelines is one of the key strategies identified in the 2005 *Strategy for the Museum Sector in New Zealand*. Standards and guidelines for museum practice are already established, and are under constant review and development. The *Strategy's* vision is that the roles of museums in society are expanding. As well as being 'keepers of heritage collections', we are also facilitators of social history and sites for interaction among our various communities. Training options for individual staff need to expand along with these broadening roles.

So I am very pleased that we will soon be ready to enrol people into the new workplace-based museum training programmes being offered through the Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation (ATTTO). Some museum staff have already

## Massey University Museum Studies Research Resource

Massey University has now made abstracts of its Museum Studies theses available on its website: <http://maori.massey.ac.nz/heritage/index.shtml>.

There is also a hot link from the University Library catalogue direct to these abstracts, which include all Masters theses from 1996

ON BEHALF OF TE PAPA, STEVE BRADY, CUSTOMER SERVICES MANAGER, ACCEPTS THE 2005 TOURISM WORKPLACE TRAINING AWARDS TROPHY FROM GAYLE SHERIDAN, CEO OF ATTO. TE PAPA HOSTS TONY KUEPFER AND JAY HOU PAPA, PARTICIPANTS IN THE TRAINING PROGRAMME, LOOK ON AT THE CEREMONY HELD AT TE HONO KI HAWIKI ON TE PAPA'S MARAE. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: ATTO



undertaken the National Certificate in Tourism and Travel (Core Skills) or the National Certificate in Tourism (Attraction Guiding). In September Te Papa received the ATTO Excellence in Tourism Workplace Training Award for its support of staff in these programmes.

### The training track

The next challenge is to firmly establish the National Certificate in Museum Practice and ensure that staff from all kinds of museums and galleries are able to take advantage of the opportunities it will offer. Being flexible and workplace-based, part-time and volunteer staff as well as full-time employees will be able to learn at their own level and pace. I see this as an important enhancement of the range of support available to people in the museum sector. We already have tertiary qualifications, informal peer support, targeted workshops and organisational training programmes. Now we will also have a nationally recognised formal certificate programme specifically to encourage and focus on-the-job learning.

Many people within the museum sector have already contributed to the establishment of these qualifications. The unit standards that make up the Certificate cover core skills, museum collections, customer services, museum practice and public programmes. New units will be added as needs are identified, and all the units are open to review. This ongoing monitoring and development will allow museum people to continue to shape the kind of training and support available for museum people. And it is people who are the heart of the museum sector.

Phillipa Tocker is Executive Director of Museums Aotearoa

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VMK089

# Records of the Auckland Museum – 75 years of publication, 1930–2005

Brian Gill marks a milestone in museum scholarly publishing

On 30 June 1930, Auckland Museum published the first issue of a new scholarly serial, *Records of the Auckland Institute and Museum*. Publication has continued roughly annually (since 1999 the title has been *Records of the Auckland Museum*), with only a few years missed. With publication of volume 42 in 2005, the museum celebrated 75 years of publication, an admirably long and consistent record of scholarly publication considering the Museum's small complement of curatorial staff and research associates.

## Purposeful publishing

The purpose behind such a periodical was given in the Museum's Annual Report for 1930–31, which stated that "... Besides forming a means of publication of the results of research carried out by the staff, the *Records* has already brought us in exchange many valuable overseas publications." Providing an outlet for research papers by Museum staff, and by outside researchers working on the Museum's collections, is still a central aim, along with library exchanges. Some 450 serial titles have been received on exchange in the past 75 years, and currently there are around 250 active exchange agreements world-wide.

Scholars must publish their work if it is to have lasting value. The *Records* is Auckland Museum's contribution to the global recording and dissemination of new knowledge. The adjective "new" is important. Many organisations disseminate and interpret existing knowledge, and this is done, for example, in museum displays and in teaching at the school and undergraduate level. Far fewer organisations generate new knowledge, but museums sit firmly in this category through the research activities of their staff and research associates. Less esoterically, Auckland Museum can point to its *Records* as a tangible and cost-effective

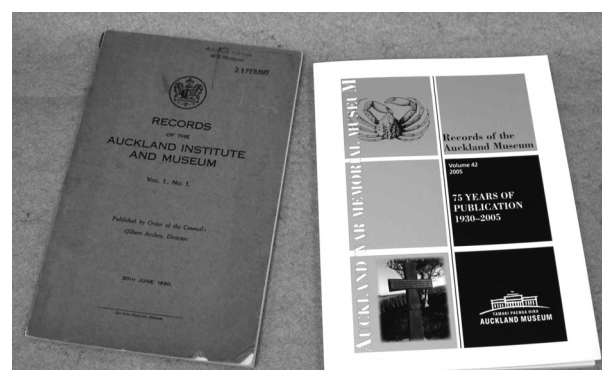
contribution to its statutory obligation (under the Auckland War Memorial Museum Act 1996) to support scholarship and research.

## A record of achievement

The *Records* were begun while Sir Gilbert Archey was Director, but were in keeping with the vision of his great predecessor, T.F. Cheeseman. Cheeseman wrote in 1917 of the possibility that Auckland Museum might not "exist solely for purposes of public instruction and recreation" but might also "utilise its collections for the higher aim of scientific research, thus striving for the increase of knowledge, as well as its diffusion".

The 65 *Records* issues to date contain 478 papers and short notes, representing the work of 155 authors and co-authors. The *Records* are specially important in at least three ways. They make a significant contribution to archaeological and ethnographic scholarship for New Zealand and the south-west Pacific, providing a much-needed outlet for lengthy descriptions of excavations and objects. In biology, they represent a major contribution to the documentation of New Zealand's biodiversity, containing descriptions of 700 new species (and other taxa). Thirdly, they have begun to publish articles on Auckland Museum's own history, providing useful material for historians and museum studies students.

Year by year the *Records* build into a sizeable body of knowledge. A few random examples of the varied content are a 1933 paper by Lucy Cranwell on Cook Islands botany, a paper from the same year by



THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE OF THE MUSEUM RECORDS ALONGSIDE THE FIRST ISSUE FROM 1930. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: B. GILL.



SIR GILBERT ARCHY (FOREGROUND) AT AUCKLAND MUSEUM, JULY 1953. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: NEW ZEALAND HERALD, AUCKLAND MUSEUM NEG. NO. H2182.

Baden Powell on Chatham Islands molluscs, a 1949 paper by Graham Turbott recording unusual breeding biology (no free-living tadpole stage) in a second species of native frog, and a paper by Sir Gilbert Archey on Māori wood sculpture in 1967. A 1980 paper by Aileen Lady Fox documenting the 1961 archaeological excavations at the Mount Roskill pa site was an essential source in 2005 for the environmental impact reports attending the State Highway 20 motorway extensions in that suburb. A 1995 paper by Bruce Hayward and colleagues is an example of important ecological base-line information. Their systematic survey of the fauna of the sediment of Whangape Harbour, Northland, will be repeatable in decades ahead as a way of assessing the health of this harbour.

Altogether, just under half the *Records* papers deal with zoology, more than a quarter cover archaeology-ethnology, 16% are botanical, and 7% deal with geology-palaeontology. There are few papers in other subjects (e.g. applied arts, social history, bibliography), but more would be welcome. All papers are peer-reviewed. Auckland Museum also publishes *Bulletin of the Auckland Museum* as a vehicle for longer monographs (19 issues to date).

### Maintaining a scholarly tradition

Much of what I have stated for Auckland Museum and its *Records* applies to museums generally. All the best and largest biological/ethnographic museums in the main cities of the Western world (and some major art galleries) produce scholarly serials. It is an indication that an organisation has achieved a certain critical mass in its research capacity. Scores of these serials emanate from the major museums of Europe and North America. They are also produced regularly by South African museums and by all the museums of the state and territory capitals of Australia. *Records of the Australian Museum* (Sydney) is issued three times a year, while *Memoirs of Museum Victoria* (Melbourne) and *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum* (Brisbane) appear twice-yearly.

In New Zealand, the Museum of New Zealand has a long history of scholarly publishing under numerous titles and in many formats. Currently it has an annual serial called *Tuhinga*. Canterbury Museum began publishing a *Records* in 1907. It appeared irregularly for much of its history, but has now resumed annual publication. (Otago Museum began a *Records* in 1964 but publication has been erratic.)

I close with a general appeal to researchers in the New Zealand museum community: to study the objects in our wonderful museum collections; to support the museum periodicals (and *Te Ara*) by submitting collections-based articles; and to use and enjoy the extensive journal collections in our museum libraries, which are based in part on serials exchanges.

Brian Gill is Curator of Birds at Auckland Museum. He co-edits *Records of the Auckland Museum*, with Nigel Prickett. This article is based on a brief talk he gave at a function to celebrate the *Records* anniversary.

Titles of all *Auckland Museum Bulletins* are given on the Museum's website (Library Services/Museum Publications). Abstracts of all *Records* papers from vol. 36 are also available on the website, at Library Services/Records of the Auckland Museum.

The Auckland Museum website address is: [www.aucklandmuseum.com](http://www.aucklandmuseum.com)



# Recent doctoral thesis relating to New Zealand museums and collections

Since 2000, museum history and practice in New Zealand has attracted increasing interest from doctoral researchers both in New Zealand and overseas, so it is timely to publicise some recent theses.

## David Butts

*Māori and museums: the politics of indigenous recognition*

Ph.D. thesis, Massey University, 2003

This thesis examines the impact of the politics of indigenous recognition on the evolving relationships between Māori and museums, focusing on Māori participation in the governance of two New Zealand museums. Case studies of Whanganui Regional Museum, Wanganui, and Tairāwhiti Museum, Gisborne, are analysed within a reconceptualised notion of “common ground” based on principles of mutual recognition, continuity and consent. They demonstrate the importance of understanding the historical context within which public institutions are embedded, and the forces that lead to contemporary adjustments in power relationships.

Indigenous peoples have been active agents in challenging the practices of mainstream institutions from within. The transformation of museums is part of this strategy.

Dr David Butts is Director, Museum and Heritage Studies, in the School of Māori Studies, Massey University.

## Fiona Cameron

*Shaping Maori Identities and Histories: Collecting and Exhibiting Maori Material Culture at the Auckland and Canterbury Museums from the 1850s to The 1920s*

Ph.D. thesis, Massey University, 2000

Shaping Maori identities and histories critically examines the processes of collecting and exhibiting Maori material culture at the Auckland and Canterbury Museums from the 1850s to the 1920s. It interrogates the values, meanings, motivations and discourses such as ethnology and optical

technologies that drove these processes, and the way new identities and histories were established and authorised by institutions for Maori people.

The thesis critically examines how Maori communities within each site were tethered to eurocentric visions of heritage and discourses of materiality, loss and the disappearing world phenomenon through collecting. It examines the operation of these two institutions as hegemonic sites for civic lessons and social reform through exhibitions and how Maori communities were inserted into a narrative of the nation and the world within the context of the colonial project. The practices of representation within each are viewed as a ‘cultural text’ compared and contrasted in order to read and extrapolate the cultural and ideological assumptions that informed them.

Dr Fiona Cameron is Research Fellow - Museum and Cultural Heritage Studies, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney, Australia

## Joanna Cobley

*The Museum Profession in Aotearoa New Zealand: a case study in economic restructuring and investigating the movement towards feminisation*

Ph.D. thesis, University of Canterbury, 2002

Restructuring policies paved the way for a new business ethos to reshape museum practice in unprecedented ways since 1984. During this time the numbers and ratio of women employed in professional roles in museums increased dramatically. While transformations were already occurring in the museum sector prior to 1984, these changes were fuelled by democratic ideals such as improving public access, increasing the museum’s popularity and serving under-represented audiences. Post-1984, under the model of new managerialism, a shift in perception of the museum visitor from citizen to consumer led to greater emphasis on the customer

service role and arguably contributed to the devaluation or re-valuation of the status of museum work. Devaluation of work – while by no means the primary cause – can be linked to the dramatic growth of women employed in that particular sector.

Qualitative data was used as a means to conceptualise, describe and assess the effects of economic restructuring, the introduction of the new management model and the relationship to feminisation in the museum sector in Aotearoa New Zealand from 1984 – 1999.

Dr Joanna Copley is involved in Quality Assurance at the University of Canterbury. She is also working on a research project entitled, "100 years of quiet service: museum women in New Zealand 1860—1960".

### James Gore

*Representations of History and Nation in Museums in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand – The National Museum of Australia and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.*

Ph.D. thesis, University of Melbourne, 2002.

Museum development in the two post-colonial settler societies of Australia and New Zealand is examined in this thesis, investigating the evolution of new histories as museums seek to aid the construction of post-colonial national identities. The differences and similarities between the two countries are highlighted, illustrating how museums have perpetuated traditional interpretations of nation and identifying factors which have recently challenged conventional museum practice.

Using the new National Museum of Australia and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa as case studies, the researcher analyses their attempts to convey ideas of nation and national identity and questions how museums, both in the past and the present, have constructed identities for their non-indigenous populations.

Dr James Gore is currently Andrew Mellon Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the History Department at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. His thesis is available online at: <http://eprints.unimelb.edu.au/archive/00000320/>

### Conal McCarthy

*From curio to taonga: a genealogy of display at New Zealand's national museum, 1865-2001.* Ph.D. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2004.

This thesis examines changes in the museum display of Māori culture through an historical analysis of exhibitions and audience at New Zealand's national museum. From Colonial Museum in 1865 to Te Papa in 2001, it traces a genealogy of display – an inventory of the visual categories through which Māori objects were made visible to people – as curio, specimen, artefact, art and taonga. Showing how and why the meanings of words and things were shaped and reshaped by social forces, this study makes an important contribution to the theory and history of museums and our understandings of the cultures of display.

Dr Conal McCarthy recently took up his appointment as Director, Museum and Heritage Studies, Victoria University of Wellington. A book based on his thesis will be published next year by Berg.

### Amiria Salmond

*Thinking Through Things: museums, anthropology and imperial exchange.*

Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2001.

This work explores the role of material cultural research in anthropology and related disciplines from the late eighteenth century to the present. Grounded in an historical ethnography of museums in New Zealand and Scotland, the work traces the movement of artefacts now held in contemporary collections through space and time, demonstrating how and why things were bought, exchanged, stolen and carried across oceans to arrive in present-day museums. The collecting of artefacts and their study both in museums and in the field are emphasised as key strategies in the development of anthropological thought. While much late-twentieth century writing in anthropology has employed analytic models and methodologies derived from the study of language, this work belongs to a growing body of research drawing on the epistemological potency of artefacts, the distinctive insights afforded by engagement with material things.

Dr Ami Henare (formerly Salmond) is now Assistant Curator of Anthropology at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge, England, UK. Cambridge University Press has just published a book based on her thesis entitled *Museums, Anthropology and Imperial Exchange*.

### James Samson

*Cultures of collecting: Māori curio collecting in Murihiku, 1865-1975.*

Ph.D. thesis, University of Otago. 2003

This thesis argues that the 'meaning' of collections of pre-European material culture are not self-evident. In order to use collections in valid historical constructions, processes of formation need to be understood – only then can issues of representation be addressed.

Examination of the collecting process led to the identification of five collecting paradigms: the acquisition of social status; financial return; an adjunct to natural history collecting; an adjunct to historical recording; and as ethnological or culture-area collecting.

'Filtering' processes associated with each collecting paradigm resulted in particular and predictable, but not always distinctive, patterns of collection composition. This is the point: if selective processes that shaped a collection are understood, it is then possible to use collections to make valid statements about the past.

Dr Jim Samson is now Curator of Wairoa Museum.

### Oliver Stead

*New lamps for old: the activities of Sir Rex de Charambac Nan Kivell as a collector and dealer of fine art.*

Ph.D. thesis, University of Otago, 2003

Sir Rex Nan Kivell (1898-1977), a New Zealand-born art dealer and collector, was managing director of the Redfern Gallery in London from 1931 to 1965. This thesis documents his life from humble origins near Christchurch to retirement in Morocco and a knighthood. World War I took him to Britain in 1916, but influenza in 1917 ended brief active service in France. In 1925 he joined the Redfern

Gallery, which specialised in works by staff and students of the London art schools. He began collecting historical material relating to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, becoming London's leading private collector in this field. In 1959, after protracted negotiations, his collection was bought by Australia, which later received a gift of further works. Long recognised as one of London's leading dealers, Nan Kivell was knighted for services to the arts in 1977, finally fulfilling a personal quest.

Dr Oliver Stead is Head of Collections Management at the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

### Paul Williams

*New Zealand's Identity Complex: a critique of cultural practices at the Museum Of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.*

Ph.D. thesis, University of Melbourne, 2003

This dissertation critically analyses New Zealand's national museum Te Papa Tongarewa. Since it opened in 1998, Te Papa, arguably the world's foremost exponent of the "new museology," has been popularly and critically supported for its innovations in the areas of popular accessibility, bicultural history, and Maori-government management arrangements. The study examines and problematises these claims to exceptionality. In producing an analysis that locates the museum within cultural, political, economic and museological contexts, it examines how the museum's particular institutional programme developed, and points to limitations in its policy and practice. By revealing the limitations of Te Papa's concepts and practices in this area, the author contends that the museum is better seen as a symbol of biculturalism than a public forum for its deliberation. The conclusion considers the museum's first half decade, and asks whether it offers solutions to a museum world often characterized as being in the midst of "an identity crisis." The author concludes that because of its particularly strong commitment to new museological principles, and to a certain political agenda, Te Papa may struggle to adapt to future change.

Dr Paul Williams is now an Assistant Professor / Faculty Fellow in the Program in Museum Studies at New York University, USA.

# Matariki – marking the passing of time



DANCERS LOUISE POTIKI BRYANT, DOLINA WEHIPEIHANA AND JUSTINE HOHAIA PERFORMED AT THE AUCKLAND MUSEUM DURING THE 2004 MATARIKI PROGRAMME. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: AUCKLAND MUSEUM.

*Matariki atua ka eke mai i te rangi e roa, e. Whangainga iho ki te mata o te tau roa, e. Divine Matariki come forth from the far-off heaven. Bestow the first fruits of the year upon us.*

Turning skywards towards the eastern horizon on a late-May dawn, you will be offered a sight like no other. The spectacular group of stars that greets your morning, has invoked tradition from various cultures over generations, and is commonly known as the Pleiades. To Māori this is Matariki.

This cluster of almost 500 stars appears within the constellation of Taurus. Throughout the rest of the Pacific and around the world it is recognized as a significant celestial group. In mid-May each year in New Zealand, Matariki disappears from our view only to reappear again in late May or early June. In the past, this was an indicator to iwi that the New Year was to begin.

## A time for celebration

For some iwi the New Year starts with the sighting of the star Puanga (also known as Rigel), which rises above the horizon about half an hour before Matariki. This was a time to remember those who had passed on, and to celebrate life and the coming

Catherine Jehly describes how museums are playing their part as Matariki regains its place on the New Zealand calendar.

year. It was also a period of abundance, as the crops had been harvested and stored, and people were engaged in hunting and fishing. Each iwi had its own unique way of recognising the start of the new season. Hangi were often cooked by those waiting for Matariki to rise above the horizon, and the food would be offered to the stars upon their sighting. Amongst most iwi the New Year celebration centred on feasting and entertaining – throughout the Pacific Matariki is often referred to as the “bringer of food”.

In traditional times and for some Māori today, recognizing the importance of Matariki is more practical than celebratory, with emphasis placed on the gathering of local foods, especially shellfish. Ngati Whatua artist Bernard Makoare has described Matariki as a period of particular significance for those who continue to live close to the land.

## A time for action

Matariki has been in the past, and continues to be, a tool for political action. The post-Treaty history of Māori has seen the utilisation of Matariki as a powerful symbol of tino rangatiratanga and iwi identity. The coat of arms that is incorporated into the flags of the Kingitanga is named Te Paki o Matariki (after the old expression that refers to “the fine weather of Matariki”), and features the seven most visible stars of Matariki in its design.

## A time for cultural affirmation

Contemporary times have seen the development by hapu, iwi and, more recently, city councils, of formal gatherings, festivals and concerts aimed at celebrating the Māori New Year. Ngati Kahungunu



NGA MAUNGA BY OLIVIA NGARONGO (MANIAPOTO, TAINUI) INTRODUCES THE EXHIBITION MATARIKI: GODDESSESS OF THE STARS AT THE WAIKATO MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: WAIKATO MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY

have held the Mahinarangi Moonbeams festival for the last several years, complete with fireworks, hot air balloons, art workshops and performances. This year, community organizations around the country ran a whole range of events, that included street parties, cooking classes, winter balls, indigenous food festivals, theatrical and musical performances, exhibitions, ta moko and weaving workshops, language classes and craft stalls. You can now also send 'Happy Matariki' cards to family and friends, and play interactive Matariki games online.

### A time for museums

In 2001, with support from Te Papa Tongarewa and the Ministry of Education, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori initiated a programme promoting Matariki, with the aim of encouraging Māori language renewal. Since then, museum-associated Matariki celebrations have become increasingly common. The opening of Rotorua Museum of Art and History's 2002 show *Hine, E Hine!* was timed to coincide with Matariki, as was *Ko Tawa: Taonga From Our Ancestral Landscapes*, which opened at Auckland War Memorial Museum in June of this year.

Museums and galleries across the country are in the process of developing and refining their Matariki-based programmes. This year Waikato Museum of Art and History embarked on a collaborative project that saw the involvement of iwi, artists, theatre groups and local authorities. On June 23 the Museum launched its Matariki festival with the exhibition, *Matariki: Goddesses of the Stars*, which includes art works by Te Waiata Ida Hamm, Bonnie Marshall, Olivia Ngarongo, Eleanor Brown and Steve Draper. *Matariki: Goddesses of the Stars* is also a musical production created by Arkowa Ltd and Māori Horizon, who are from Taumarunui but have links to Tainui. The production was taken from the same name and concept as the exhibition and was supported by the communities of Taumarunui and Hamilton, and was staged at Hamilton's Founders Theatre with a cast and crew of 150 people. Mamae Takerei, Waikato Museum's Concept Leader Tangata Whenua, described the exhibition and associated programme as a way to illustrate the relationships between the Waikato iwi and river and its source.

Matariki is fast becoming a significant event on our national calendar, and one that is being identified by

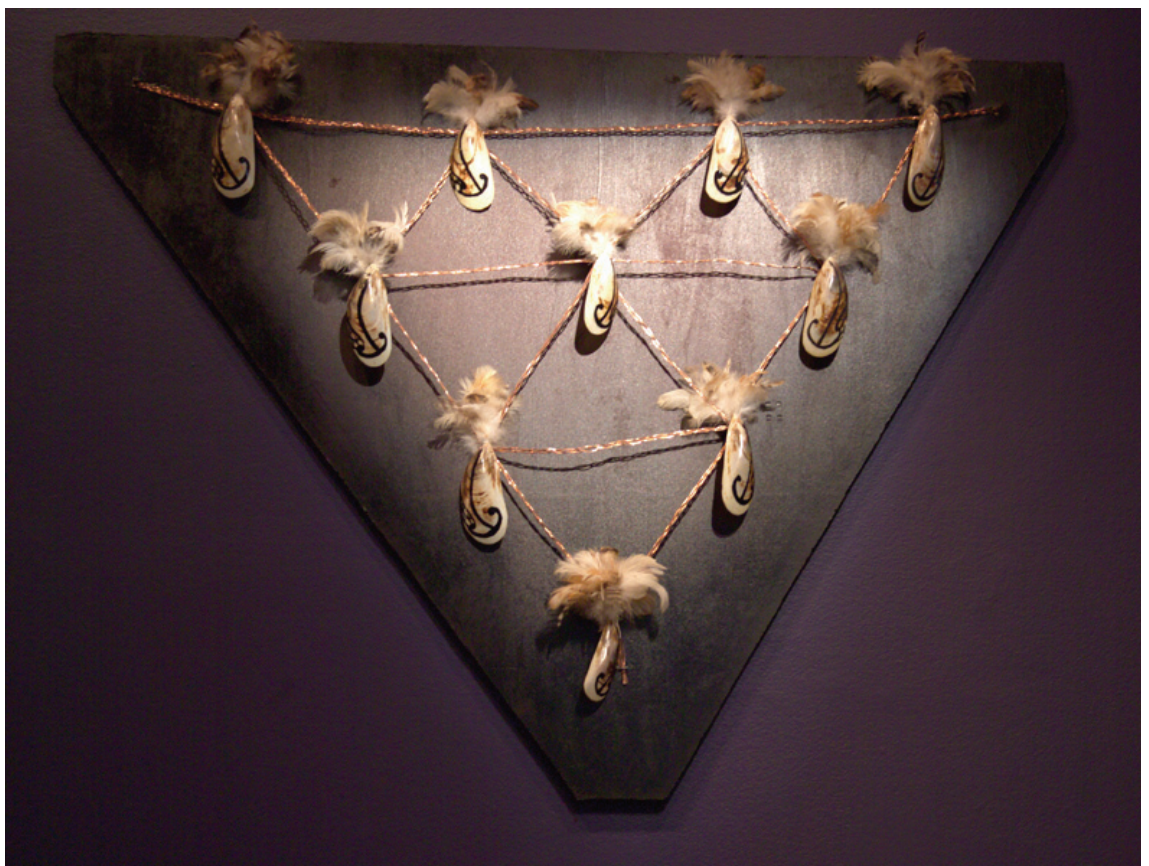
**KAITIAKI BY STEVE DRAPER (NGATI HIKAIRO, WAIKATO, TAINUI)**  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: WAIKATO MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY

Māori and non-Māori alike as an effective tool to promote learning, and to highlight New Zealand's unique place in the world. Paul Tapsell, Tumuaki Māori at Auckland War Memorial Museum, believes that while the celebration of Matariki has an important role to play in the strengthening of both Māori identity and relationships, it should not be removed from its original context; "...it is imperative that we regard Matariki as not just one festive moment in our Māori calendar, but also a bridge between today's world of homogenized Māori values and the once diverse and celestially complex relationship hundreds of hapu/tribes throughout Aotearoa once relied on for their survival in customary times".

Catherine Jehly, of Te Arawa and Te Aitanga a Hauiti descent, is Assistant Curator Māori at the Auckland War Memorial Museum, where she is responsible for the Taonga Database. She is a graduate of Waikato and Massey Universities, with qualifications in anthropology, museum studies and Māori development.



**TUPUANUKU BY ELEANOR BROWN (NGATI TE ATA, NGAPUHI)**  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: WAIKATO MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY



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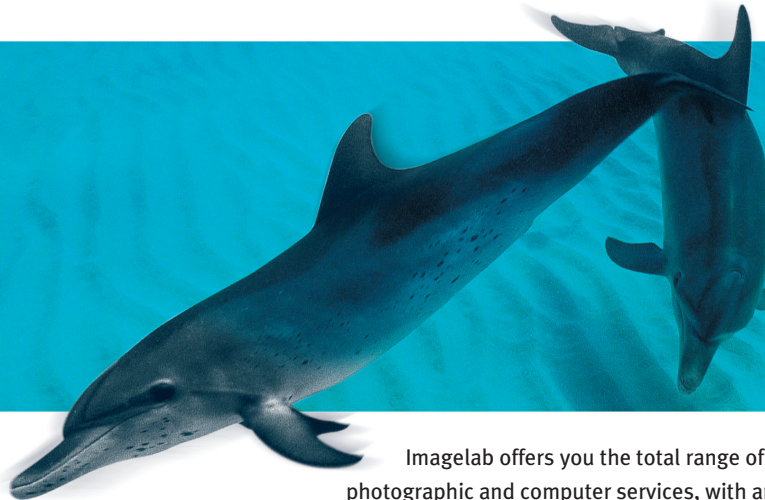
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