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A.G.M.A.N.Z. NEWSLETTER NO. 15

May, 1963.

Medieval English Pottery from the Guildhall Museum, London: In 1961 the Guildhall Museum made available part of their collection of medieval pottery for a tour of Japan. The British Council has circulated the exhibition to Japan and Northern Europe and advises that it may be made available to New Zealand after June 1964. Estimates of costs are:-

Shipping - freight from N.Z. to England or Australia only may be payable, estimated at £71.17. 6.

Insurance - will be met by the British Council.

Catalogue - a very attractive catalogue has been prepared by the British Council, and with a suitably altered title page would be expensive to reprint for the N.Z. tour. The exhibition consists of 48 items and is much smaller than the English Silver toured in 1956. The catalogue mentions that hitherto the pots have been taken for granted as ungainly peasant wares, but they were described in Japan as "the finest pots which we have seen from Europe". They should be of particular interest to potters. Landing, circulation and sharing of costs will be handled by the Auckland Art Gallery.

Will member institutions who wish to have the exhibition, please let me know by the 17th June next.

The 7th Biennial Conference: Every March the Association comes to life at the Annual Meeting or Biennial Conference. The autumnal rites were held this year at the Taranaki Museum and we are indebted to the following for a most successful conference:- the Mayor and Council of New Plymouth City, the Taranaki Museum Board and Executive Committee, Mrs. A.N. Gale and the members of the New Plymouth Committee, Mesdames Cassie, Grayling, Rangi, Rau, Spence, and Messrs. R. Allan, V.C. Davies, T.W. Green, T. Linehan, and B. Norman. The main theme of the Conference was the problems of small art galleries and museums. The annual airing of our financial difficulties, staff shortages and lack of technical knowledge made it clear once again that there is much to be done before members can discharge adequately their public obligations for careful collecting, scholarly research, inspired display and informal education.

The next Biennial Conference will be held in 1965 and members will be asked to accept an invitation from the Hawkes Bay Art Gallery and Museum to meet at Napier. The first Biennial Conference was held at Napier in 1951.

Presidential Address

Given by Mr. H.C. McQueen to members at the Annual Meeting on 14th March, 1963.

Since I was not at the Annual Meeting of the Association in 1962, when you did me the honour of making me your President, I think I should say now how much I appreciate that honour, and should also express the hope that I may prove adequate in performing my duties.

As you all know, my interests in museums are basically administrative. Naturally, therefore, I subscribe to the idea, which I have borrowed and adapted from C.E. Beeby, that all museum and art gallery problems are in their essence administrative problems. For example, the normally vexed question of staff. If a museum is to be alive, its professional staff need to be engaged in their special fields of study or research. So likewise an art gallery. Merely to dust the pictures does not make a curator. If a museum or gallery is to fulfil its function of display, it needs technical and professional staff. To recruit such staff means finding money and that is an administrative problem.

Where, then, does the Association come into the administrative picture? The first and obvious point is that it is a forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences. I remember, for example, very clearly the talk Dr. Angus Ross gave us in Dunedin two years ago on how the Otago Museum had set about getting local body support. Next, from these exchanges of ideas there may arise a concensus of opinion on the question of finance. Thus the Association has twice exercised itself to draw up recommended salary scales. The Associa-

tion must, I am sure, content itself with proposals of general interest and make up its mind that at this point it has completed its function. It is then a matter for the individual museum or gallery to use the Association's findings as the means of getting done locally what is desired. Our Association has no part to play in furthering the ends of a particular institution. Lottery grants are on our agenda today, and they provide a useful example of what I mean here.

When we approach Sir Leon Gotz's apparatus of advisory committees for some financial assistance from his ornithological specialty, we must do so in order to further schemes which will benefit the members of the Association as a whole, and not as individuals. Thus we should not support any request from an institution for a grant, whether it be for buildings, purchases, or staff, or anything else. What I think we could do as an Association is to say to Sir Leon something like this (for convenience, I shall refer to him instead of to his advisory committees):

"Amongst us we contain all the experts in every aspect of gallery and museum work in New Zealand. If you want specialist advice on any proposal made to you, we shall be happy to nominate a panel - of two or three people - whose opinions will be valuable. Refer your problem to them - confidentially if you like - and then make your own decision in the light of their expert advice."

Thus the Association would not itself make any recommendation to the Minister, but it would be acting in the general interests of museums and galleries.

If I may take another example of how we might come into the matter of lottery funds, I should like to put forward another idea of general concern. I think, but I am not sure, that provincial and local museums must often be in need of specialist advice on some problem. At present they may, if they are lucky, get the assistance of someone from one of the major galleries or museums, through the generosity of the board of one of these institutions, or through the willingness of a staff member to sacrifice his holiday to help the smaller body. I suggest, therefore, that we should ask for a revolving fund - that is, one that is maintained annually at a given figure - from which the Association would pay the salary and expenses of someone to spend a week or a month or indeed a year in a gallery or museum needing his or her help. My feeling is that if such a fund existed, institutions which now do not know quite what they need, or how to get what they know they need, would soon put that fund to good use.

I should add a practical administrative detail. Part of the fund should be earmarked for the Association's administrative work in connection with the fund - secretarial assistance, in short.

If, as I hope, we ask for funds to continue the policy so generously made possible by the Gulbenkian Foundation, enabling people to travel overseas, those funds would also come within my definition of a "general" concern, even though each year individuals - both persons and institutions - would benefit from it.

The Association will not maintain its vigour and the interest of its members if it is not actively engaged in work that produces some kind of results. We have a creditable record of such activity in the past, and it is to the sort of thing that I have mentioned that my personal views incline me today. I must add that we all know that control of the purse is a potent element in the affairs of any organisation. If we have funds that we control, if our advice is taken in the use of funds, then our constituency - the institutions and individuals who make up an Association - will feel that we are worth taking care of.

The question of the general finances of art galleries and museums is one on which I shall touch briefly. I do not think that any of our institutions should ever be encouraged to turn to the Government for assistance in day-to-day running. If a gallery or museum cannot get sufficient local support, then it is futile to expect the taxpayer or the lottery loser to find money for it. Even the Dominion Museum and National Art Gallery, in my judgment, depend too much now on Government support, and the Board of Trustees has had some degree of success in increasing local body support in recent years. But not nearly a large enough degree of success to please me and other members of the Board.

That we have successful galleries and museums depending entirely on local support shows that many New Zealanders appreciate what those institutions can do for their cultural life, that is, for their interest in their local history, in the flora and fauna and the natural features of their area, and also as a means of satisfying their proper curiosity about the world about them. We are vastly different from the situation in England, about which the "Economist" said a year or so ago, "There are 800 and something museums in Britain, some of them unbelievably bad". Our galleries and museums without doubt could be better, but none that I have seen warrants the word "bad".

We have from time to time visitors to New Zealand who deplore our deficiencies - our lack of cultural life, our complacency, our mediocrity, our sensitiveness to criticism. At the risk of being charged with the crime of complacency, I would ask: What country is there where such a high proportion of the people as in New Zealand have access to pictures and museum displays? And where such a high proportion do in fact visit galleries and museums? Where, in fact, is there so much local support for museums and galleries? And where is there such an admirable system of museum education as ours with its close co-operation of education specialists and museum staff?

It is, of course, the children who in the last twenty-five years have been so well cared for in the city museums, at least, who are becoming the adults who appreciate those museums.

To say that we do these things well is not to say that they could not be done better, or on a wider scale. In that sense we have no reason to be complacent.

In another connection I am on record in saying that New Zealanders are unduly modest. In our field of galleries and museums it is time we drew more attention to our achievements, and while listening carefully to our critics, still did not concede that our standards are not high.

There are two lines from a song in the "Belle of New York" that have always appealed to me as a useful corrective to our national modesty -

"Although you can never be like us
Be as like us as you're able to be".

I do not suggest that the Association should adopt those lines as its motto, but I do suggest that in our galleries and museums we are, whether from the administrative side - which is, you will recall, the basis of this address - or from the professional side - and I shall conclude with a typical piece of New Zealand modesty - we aren't doing too badly!

PROBLEMS OF SMALL ART GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS

On 25th January last, 36 art galleries and museums were asked to write a note on problems which the Association might study, and steps that we might take to help new, isolated and small museums. We are indebted to 20 curators for replies. Their opinions will be clear from these extracts:-

Local Body Support: "In keeping with most museums, finance is our major problem, and local body support would be a great help". R.J. Seal, Museum of Transport and Technology, Auckland.

"At the present time our great problem is to persuade the City Council to increase its grant to the Institute. For the last 5 years the grant has been static... Hence we would favour any proposals to persuade Local Authorities to make adequate contributions". J.W. Russell, Nelson Institute, Museum and Library.

Three County Councils and six Boroughs in the area agreed several years ago to set up a West Coast Historical Museum at Hokitika, and to contribute funds for three years. The present room is inadequate and plans are being prepared to add 1500 sq.ft. When available funds are spent, the financial resources will be exhausted. There will be no certainty of income, and the caretaker has to be paid. "If the museum is to be maintained at a high standard in the future, and we feel this is absolutely essential if it is to be of value in Westland, then a steady and reasonable income is imperative". R.C. Drummond, West Coast Historical Museum, Hokitika.

The question of a common basis of local body support was discussed at the Annual Meeting, and members resolved that the incoming Council should discuss the matter informally with the Municipal and Counties Associations to find the best way to reach a solution to the problem.

Loan of Officers from larger Museums: "The temporary loan of officers from larger museums to help smaller museums is an excellent idea. The need for authoritative opinions is ever present. In return... it is possible for the smaller museums to come to light with material that the larger museums are glad to have." Miss M. King, Russell Centennial Museum.

"In a year or so, when reorganized, we could use the assistance of a geologist to help untangle mixed specimens". H. Grimson, Coromandel School of Mines Museum.

"It would be better to spend money on staff for the 4 large city museums, with an obligation on them to help smaller art galleries and museums, than to encourage the smaller museums to acquire funds for the purpose. Every £1 spent on the larger art galleries and museums in this way at this stage will yield better returns, because the one amount of money can bring benefit to a number of places." W.H. Way, Gisborne Art Gallery and Museum.

"Aid for display and cataloguing is a good idea. We manage to get Terry Barrow at odd times, due to the generosity of the Dominion Museum...I feel that one should have a major problem on one's hands before inviting anyone to help. Unless the visiting officer has something to get his teeth into and is fully extended on the job, it would be an insult." J.S.B. Munro, Hawkes Bay Art Gallery & Museum, Napier.

Staff: "Our most serious problem is the matter of custodians. We have a most faithful band of volunteers who are in attendance $6\frac{1}{2}$ days a week from Christmas Eve until Queen's Birthday. From then until Labour Day the place is too cold to open on the off-chance of someone coming in. From Labour Day until Christmas everyone is far too busy. Yet we feel that it should be open all the year round and, so far, we have not been able to see a way of doing it." Miss M. King, Russell Centennial Museum.

"We are starting a junior. This we think very necessary, so that there is continuity, as I now feel very decrepit on two days a week and not on Mondays only as heretofore. Later I would like the junior to be trained at the metropolitan museums in various skills, for 2 or 3 months at a time, and for this we would welcome assistance with fares and lodging." J.S.B. Munro, Hawkes Bay Art Gallery and Museum, Napier. (The Gulbenkian Training Grants, offered by the Association, are intended for training staff in New Zealand. Ed.)

Handbooks: "Would AGMANZ publish a curator's handbook, not over technical, and suited to New Zealand conditions - with emphasis on silverfish. Auckland City Art Gallery have a good handbook on care of pictures. This could be complementary." J.S.B. Munro, Hawkes Bay Art Gallery and Museum, Napier.

Travelling Exhibitions: "Continuously throughout New Zealand we have exhibitions to show people what is happening in the world of contemporary western art, but seldom anything to interest people in the arts of our Asian neighbours. An exhibition of Japanese or Indian art, is a rare occasion in the galleries of our four main centres." W.H. Way, Gisborne.

"Could smaller galleries be advised of the size and number of cases in exhibitions". C.A. Brunnsden, Aigantighe Art Gallery, Timaru.

"We would welcome some suggestions as to how travelling exhibitions could be arranged for our museum." R.C. Drummond, West Coast.

The problems of small galleries and museums were discussed on Friday, 15th March, and a precis of the meeting follows:-

Mr. Swarbrick: The Gavin Gifford Memorial Museum, Te Awamutu, is a small museum of local history. It is free and supported by gifts. The average donation is 1d. per visitor. Consequently the income is small. The Auckland Museum is always willing to help us. I realise now that we should have had expert advice at all stages - particularly with the design of the building, design of showcases, arrangement of the hall, ticketing, labelling, etc. For example, we rely on visual control by an elderly man, and we have found that the arrangement of cases is very important. When we asked the police to help us control vandalism, they advised us to lock up our material, but the showcases are old ones given to us by local firms, and we cannot make them secure.

The Association might give thought to the problem of cataloguing. We use voluntary helpers, but they soon tire of the quantity of old photographs, maps, medals, buttons, etc., that we receive. The Association might also consider the problem of meeting the expenses of experts from the larger museums. The young lady who came from Auckland some years ago was most helpful, but her expenses for fares etc., were more than we had in the cashbox. We cannot afford to ask for further help. The Association could help us by arranging for experts to write pamphlets on the primary problems of small museums.

Mr. Way: Gisborne visitors give an average of 2d. per person.

Mr. White: Invercargill visitors give the Art Gallery and Museum an average of .35d. per person. Will the Association give publicity to thefts from museums by way of a circular to other museums to whom the stolen goods may be offered?

Mr. Jacques: I find that the overseas journals 'Museum' and 'Studio' are useful, but local pamphlets on our problems would be valuable. The Bishop Suter Art Gallery has an income of £500 per annum. The main expenses have been for repairs. Caretaking costs £15 a year, for a gardener to open the doors in the morning and close them at night. The gallery is unattended during the day. The Trust Board is registered under the Religious, Charitable and Educational Trusts Act, and I commend this form of control to you. The Board is free of rules, and consists of 6 members who fill any vacancies on death or retirement. We work in the gallery in the evening, and at present are labelling the pictures with excellent plastic labels. Also we are preparing a catalogue of the pictures. We welcome visitors and itinerant exhibitions from other galleries, but the large size of some exhibitions is a problem.

Mr. Turbott: A museum manual was proposed several years ago, but we did not have the time and funds to compile it. Hints for curators could be published in the Newsletter, and brought together later in a Museum Curator's Recipe Book. Any obvious gaps could then be filled.

Mr. Fisher: Time might be allotted at the next Conference for a discussion of curatorial problems. Several small group discussions would be useful.

Mr. Hamlin: Much can be accomplished by correspondence.

Mr. Way: The report on small provincial museums in Britain will be available shortly. Will the Secretary arrange for this to be sent to all small galleries and museums?

President: Apparently AGMANZ should seek funds to pay the expenses of specialists from larger museums to visit smaller museums, and to pay for the preparation of suitable handbooks.

Mr. Munro: The first thing is for the Association to obtain funds for secretarial assistance. He moved and Mr. Turbott seconded that the Kiwi Lottery Fund be asked to grant funds for secretarial assistance in order that we may provide a greater measure of help to smaller museums and galleries. The motion was carried.

THE EXTENSION SERVICE OF THE AUCKLAND MUSEUM

A summary of the addresses given by Dr. Gilbert Archey, Director of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, and by Mr. Trevor Bayliss, Extension Service Officer, on Friday 15th, March, 1963.

Dr. Archey: Primarily the service is an extension of the school service to adults. Larger cases enable the specimens to tell their own story. School cases are smaller and are used frequently to express an idea. We have devised 5 x 4 ft. panels for the Extension Service, and these fit into a cabinet which we invite Local Authorities to buy. The cabinets are offered in kit-sets and cost about £8. Limiting factors in the early stages of the service were the delays and damage which were occasioned by the use of public transport. As the result of three years savings, and a gift from Sir William Goodfellow, we now have a van. This is more flexible, safer and expeditious. The van has enabled us to send articles of higher quality to the province, and to share our treasures with the smaller towns. The van has made possible valuable contacts with country people at agricultural and pastoral shows. We contribute to these local occasions by means of displays and in return receive a host of enquiries. The service to local authorities and A. & P. shows has developed a stage further - we are now servicing local museums.

Mr. Swarbrick outlined the problems which are common to all small museums. We can help them with panel displays, which are changed every three months. Some small museums in the Auckland Province have two - some have as many as five displays from the Extension Service. If country towns wish to establish local museums, I suggest that they consider carefully the policies they intend to follow, and particularly the work, costs and problems of collections. There are breaks in continuity and development in the early years of all museums. Cataloguing and maintenance are the most costly part of museum

work and many small museums founder under these burdens. I know of a dozen small museums in the Auckland Province that have failed for this reason. Instead of establishing a local collection why not have a museum of displays and leave collecting to the main museums?

Mr. Swarbrick: A finder of a Maori adze in the Te Awamutu district would not give it to our museum if there was any suggestion that we send it away to another museum.

Mr. Bayliss: The Extension Service has two aims: 1. to display the collections, and 2. to maintain close liaison with the people of the province. At present we lack funds and time to develop the liaison side by means of lectures, films, etc.; the displays occupy 95% of my time.

The most suitable place for a display is the local museum, and the Whangarei, Dargaville and Gisborne museums, and the Taupo Tourist Centre, take our displays. Public libraries provide a very suitable setting, and high schools are excellent venues. The advantage here is that adult education classes see the displays in the evening as well as the pupils in the daytime. Another suitable location is the local authority building in each town.

The 5 x 4 ft. panel is large enough for most displays, and is as large as one man can handle. The kit set costs £8.10.0. and after glazing and finishing, the total cost of the display cabinet is about £20. Some librarians accepted them when they found that they could gain wall space by using the back of an island display as a magazine rack.

Every three months the 35 displays in the province are changed. This requires about 1200 miles of driving, spread over 1 or 2 weeks, and the van is essential to do the job. Thematic displays are preferred, and the most successful panels seem to be those that lead to further reading and study. As well as the panels, we have collections of photographs, and temporary exhibitions of birds, musical instruments, etc. Photographs and artifacts from the Museum collections are particularly appreciated at local centennial celebrations; the temporary exhibitions of birds are welcomed by acclimatization societies. At A. & P. shows, the fairground atmosphere is not appropriate for museum displays, but the local response is so good that our participation is well worthwhile. At present we cannot meet all demands for this sort of display; probably an exhibition van would be the solution.

The President thanked the two speakers for their interesting addresses. He also thanked the Auckland Institute and Museum for arranging for the van to come to New Plymouth so that members could see how the Extension Service works. (Applause.)

U.S. HISTORICAL MUSEUMS

During a recent visit to U.S.A., Mr. J.S.B. Munro received copies of two reports by the American Association for State and Local History. Extracts from these show that our problems are similar to those of U.S. Historical Societies:-

"As the more dynamic local societies try to consolidate and expand their programs, problems inevitably arise. The survey brought to light the healthy sign that local society leaders are aware of these problems. It will come as no surprise that the problem they consider to be their greatest is money - or more specifically, the lack of it for their programs, salaries, maintenance, and a host of other things ... Local leaders consider membership to be the next most pressing problem. Desirable as an increase might be, the main source of dissatisfaction is lack of enthusiasm ... Payment of dues is not enough, and participation is needed to get things done.

Third among the local societies' problems is space or quarters. Those who have not found a home want one; those that are inelegantly housed in the garret of a courthouse want out; and many societies, no matter how well housed, need additional space desperately. Local society officers have a difficult problem in saying 'No' to gifts. Without courage and clearly defined collecting objectives, valuable space has often been consumed by rosewood pianos, Victorian furniture, hair wreaths, war mementos, and acres of unidentified arrowheads.

The lack of leadership and workers to get things done is the problem fourth in importance ... Keeping an historic house or quarters open for regular hours is a

serious drain on the enthusiasm of volunteer help. Much of the important accessioning, cataloging, cleaning, and research is tedious and uninteresting, but it is important if the society is to be a good one. And even when someone is willing to keep a building open long hours for low wages out of a feeling of community dedication or to fill out social security, the society has not begun to solve the problem of leadership. Informed policies have to be set and implemented. All too often older leaders are unwilling or unable to pass the job along to younger hands.

The fifth problem is ... a lack of understanding and interest on the part of the community ... Dedicated to their communities though they may be, most societies come into prominence in terms understandable to the community only when carrying on spectacular activities: a fight to save a building, a part in a community celebration, a float in a parade, etc. Further, isolation within the community is matched by an isolation between communities; travels by Association staff members have revealed how starved society workers are for shop talk...

Other problems bothering local society personnel are: knowing how to take care of manuscript materials and museum artifacts; creating a lively publicity and public relations program; beginning a museum or improving an existing one; and planning better current and long-range programs.

A strong case can be made that the local society has the problem of a twenty year "life cycle". Societies founded and sustained by the enthusiasm of a few individuals are fragile organizations. They seem to have an average life cycle of about twenty years, although constant reorganization and revitalization tends to obscure this. The cycle runs from activity to stability to senility unless the aims or concerns of the founders become institutionalized. The best chance of survival lies with those societies that develop some equity; the cycles continue but bank accounts, historic houses, and collections usually provide enough momentum to keep the society going until the interest of a new generation becomes alive...

Problems of survival are inherent to all volunteer groups, and strangely enough the main problem is either not enough or too much turnover of officers. Well meaning though he or she may be, the local society president who remains in office until it is too embarrassing to remove him is a problem. Almost as serious as too little turnover is too much. Very often people active in a society are also members of several other organizations that make demands upon their time; as a result, those with organizational talent often make a brief contribution and then leave office to take up other community tasks...

A constant complaint...is: there are no young people sufficiently interested in taking responsibility for preserving the community's heritage. Only a few people ... characterized their society as having a membership with balanced numbers of young and old; most said their members were generally middle-aged or older. A problem of local historical societies, therefore, is not only to find more dedicated volunteers, but to find more dedicated young ones".

TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS AND THE ARTS ADVISORY COUNCIL

An account of the discussion held at the Taranaki Museum at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 13th March, 1963.

Mr. Tomory: How necessary are exhibitions? Since the end of the second world war there has been a spate of them in Europe and U.S.A. Perhaps there have been too many, but most art galleries lack large, important collections which will sustain interest throughout the year. Some extra magnetism is supplied by exhibitions. Overseas, even the most important galleries hold exhibitions.

In New Zealand, appreciation of the visual arts lags behind music, drama and ballet. One sign of this lag is the paucity of gifts of pictures and sculpture to our galleries. The collections we have are spread thinly over many small towns, and even if all publicly owned pictures were brought together in one place, they would not comprise a major collection.

From 1880 to 1956 few exhibitions were received from overseas. For many of these years I cannot trace more than one overseas exhibition, and some of them were very poor. Since 1956 the Auckland Art Gallery has tried

I am anxious to make this point, because here in New Zealand we have 11 art galleries whose quality is measured by the excellence or otherwise of their capital assets, that is to say their permanent exhibits; they should, and in many cases do, aim at building up an integrated collection and endeavour to frame a buying policy accordingly; but, to the best of my knowledge, they are all hopelessly under-endowed with funds to implement such a policy, with the possible exception of the Auckland Art Gallery. I was interested to read in your annual report that so far you have not been able to take advantage of the £15,000 import license available for importing works of art during the current licensing period.

And, on the other hand, there are many millions of pounds worth of public and commercial buildings going up every year with little or insufficient thought and money being spent on their artistic adornment with works of art to lift them up beyond the purely functional. There are hundreds of places, public parks, libraries, municipal halls, crying out for that final touch to make them really beautiful places for people to relax in and enjoy themselves.

All this leads to the conclusion that there is scope for a large programme for the acquisition of works of art by permanent galleries, and of commissioning work by New Zealand artists, which could literally run into hundreds of thousand pounds. And all this money should by no means be found from public sources, nor even the major part of it. A programme of this sort calls for a vast community effort in creating a public awareness for the need to rely not solely on the natural beauty of New Zealand which we are fortunate in enjoying at no extra cost, but to the degree to which our town population increases, to embellish our art galleries and public places.

The A.A.C. is very clear about the need of developing such a long-term programme. In the brief course of its existence, and with the limited funds at its disposal it can do little more than launch one or two pilot schemes in the direction of commissioning and helping galleries to buy better pictures, of which I hope to say more at to-night's gathering.

This brings me to the subject of travelling exhibitions, the most important and rewarding short-term means of stimulating the visual arts. The importance, and indeed the necessity, of working out a well-planned programme of travelling exhibitions hardly needs stressing. They are important for the practising artist; they create public interest in your gallery, they give an understanding of the past and of current trends; and most significantly, they create an awareness of quality which, following on what I tried to say before, is the first step towards spreading the desire among those who support galleries to improve their own permanent collection.

The A.A.C. has set aside a sum of £3,000 this year to subsidize travelling exhibitions. I am disturbed to find that it has not been fully spent. Before the A.A.C. came into existence, funds were made available by the Department of Internal Affairs for that purpose. It is interesting to see what has been spent by Government sources on travelling exhibitions over the years:

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| 1956 | £855 |
| 1957 | 785 |
| 1958 | 675 |
| 1959 | £1588 - |
| Plus Govt. grant for paintings by Winston Churchill | £2098 |
| | £3686 |
| 1960 | 250 |
| 1961 | 1525 |
| 1962 | 1450 |
| So far committed for 1963 | £250 |

In addition, a grant of £500, now increased to £800, has been made to the Association of Arts Societies, some of which is spent to assist exhibitions for display among their member societies.

To my knowledge, no application for a grant to assist a travelling exhibition was declined by the A.A.C., except one for works by Ivor Hitchens when a sum of £1000 was asked for and the A.A.C. offered a grant of £500 only. The issue was simply that most of the smaller galleries were unwilling to bear what the Council considered a reasonable share of the costs.

And this, I think, is what this discussion should be about: Galleries must clarify their own thinking as to the importance they attach to travelling exhibitions. If they believe, as I do, that they are very important,

then they must be prepared to raise the money somehow to bear an equitable share of the costs. I venture to make the rather heretic suggestion that galleries on a very restricted purchasing budget may, at this stage, be better served by spending their money on exhibitions than on purchasing pictures which later on they may regret to have bought.

Some time last year, the A.A.C. called a meeting of art gallery administrators to see whether agreement could be reached on a comprehensive policy on travelling exhibitions and on the setting up of an organization to tour them nationally. The outcome was meagre, to say the least. Galleries seem content to leave the initiative for selecting and organizing overseas exhibitions largely to the Auckland Art Gallery, and in particular to Mr. Peter Tomory, and to a lesser degree to the National Gallery in Wellington. This places a heavy responsibility on Mr. Tomory's shoulders, but if he is willing to bear it, and everybody agrees that he should do so, no one will object, and, in fact, we will all be greatly indebted to him. But that does not exonerate other galleries from paying their fair share towards the cost of exhibitions over and above any money the A.A.C. is able to make available.

At a recent meeting of the Visual Arts Advisory Committee of the A.A.C. the view was expressed that it would be better, rather than to tour a number of minor exhibitions which come our way, to concentrate our efforts on planning one or two really important exhibitions a year, and to plan them well in advance. I must warn you that these could be costly ventures, bearing in mind transport costs, insurance, and probably the need of someone accompanying them capable of taking care of valuable exhibits. There seems no reason why exhibitions should be confined to paintings and sculpture; in 1956 the Internal Affairs Department assisted with an Exhibition of English Silverware. Now that we have a Lurcat tapestry in the country, our appetite has been whetted to see some beautiful gobelins and tapestries. The possibilities are never-ending.

These, then, are some of the problems of travelling exhibitions which your Conference may feel should be discussed. All I can say as a member of the A.A.C. is that we are anxious to help: help in any way possible within the means at our disposal, for the visual arts to flourish alongside all other art forms. Before long the new Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council will come into being, and it is to be hoped that it will have larger resources to draw on to develop; also a long term programme of acquisitions and commissions worthy of the tremendous growth of New Zealand.

Dr. Robertson: Insurance is the most serious problem with travelling exhibitions. Could the Arts Advisory Council set up an insurance fund?

Mr. Tomory: Insurance for pictures in England is 6d. per £100. In New Zealand the same cover costs as much as £2.10.0 per £100. We have been "fortunate" in obtaining cover at the rate of 10/- per £100. In 7 years there have been only 3 claims for 50 exhibitions, and there are grounds for a reduction in the premiums.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to Mr. Turnovsky.

MEMBERSHIP

We congratulate Miss Rose Reynolds of Christchurch on the award of the M.B.E. in the New Year Honors List. The award was made by Her Majesty, the Queen, in recognition of Miss Reynold's inspired reconstruction of early Christchurch scenes at the Canterbury Museum and other services to the community.

We welcome the following new members :

Mr. A.J. Bannister, Wanganui Public Museum, Maria Place, Wanganui.

Mrs. F.M. Bestall, 7 Lighthouse Road, Napier.

Mrs. W. Horton, 44 Victoria Avenue, Remuera.

Mrs. A. Pearse, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin.

COOK ISLANDS MUSEUM, RAROTONGA

The Council has learnt with pleasure that a committee has obtained a Government grant and raised funds locally, (over £5,000) for a fire-proof building to house a library and museum for the Cook Islands. The secretary is Mr. B. G. Thorogood of Rarotonga. The museum will cover the arts, crafts, culture and antiquities of the Cook Islands, and will be opened in 1964. The Cook Islands Library and Museum Committee will be very grateful for any copies of the Polynesian Journal that members can spare, especially early numbers.

HISTORIC ARTICLES ACT 1962.

The following sections affect members :-

Section 2. "Historic Article" means -

- a. Any chattel, artifact, carving, object, or thing which relates to the history, art, culture, or economy of the Maori or other Polynesian inhabitants of New Zealand and which was or appears to have been manufactured in New Zealand by any such inhabitant, or brought to New Zealand by an ancestor of any such inhabitant, more than sixty years before the date of the commencement of this Act; and
- b. Any book, diary, letter, document, paper, record, or other written matter (whether in manufactured or printed form) -
 1. Which relates to New Zealand and is of historical, scientific, or national value or importance; and
 11. Which is more than ninety years old; and
 111. Of which, in the case of a book first printed and published in New Zealand, no copy is in the custody of the General Assembly library or of any library maintained by any Government Department, local authority, public body, University, or school or of a library of any other prescribed class; and
- c. Any type specimen of any animal, plant or mineral existing or formerly existing in New Zealand. ("Type specimen" means the specimen on which is based an original published description of the animal, plant, or mineral of which the specimen serves as an example.)

Section 5. It shall not be lawful after the commencement of this Act for any person to remove or attempt to remove any historic article from New Zealand, knowing it to be an historic article, otherwise than pursuant to the authority and in conformity with the terms and conditions of a written certificate of permission given by the Minister (of Internal Affairs) under this Act.

Section 13. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Estate and Gift Duties Act 1955, no gift duty shall be payable in respect of any gift of an historic article to the Minister on behalf of the Crown or to any library, museum, or other public institution for the benefit of the public and no such gift shall be included in the dutiable estate of the donor, notwithstanding that he may die within three years after having made the gift.

THE FREEDOM FROM HUNGER CAMPAIGN 1960-65.

This campaign has been launched by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. The Director of Icom has asked members to assist by means of suitable exhibitions of agricultural implements, paintings depicting agriculture, hunger or famine, man's struggle with the soil or the sea, etc. The purpose of these exhibitions would be two-fold : to highlight what many museums will probably find to have been a major human and artistic activity in the past, and to stimulate living artists to tackle this human subject. Will members who present exhibitions please give the Hon. Secretary a description of them in due course.

THE NUFFIELD RESEARCH FUND

On 27th March, 1962 Dr. W. M. Hamilton, Secretary of D.S.I.R., addressed members on scientific research in New Zealand. During the discussion following the paper, Dr. R. S. Duff asked whether it would be possible for appointments to botany, zoology and geology collections at museums to be the direct responsibility of the government departments concerned. Dr. Hamilton replied that he could not recall D.S.I.R. ever having received an application. Museums have not indicated any great interest in research. Applications are called each year for a Nuffield grant of £5,000 for biological research but museums do not apply.

During the Conference at New Plymouth in March, 1963 the Nuffield Fund was mentioned again. Dr. R. A. Falla opened the discussion of museum research with the remark that there is no justification for complaints by members that research in museums is stultified by lack of resources. The Nuffield N.Z. Advisory Committee invited museums to apply for £5,000 for biological research in 1963, but when applications closed recently there were none from museum scientists. As the 40 members present at the meeting had not heard of the Fund, I was asked to obtain information regarding the invitations said to have been sent to museums, and to seek a postponement of the 1963 awards so that members might apply.

Dr. R. E. Corbett, Hon. Secretary of the Nuffield N.Z. Advisory Committee, has advised :-

1. Museum staffs are eligible to apply for Nuffield Research Grants.
2. A circular invitation dated 29th October, 1962 was sent to the Directors of the Museums at Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland. An invitation was sent in 1959 and 1960.
3. If Museum staffs have not been aware of the Fund, it is not the fault of the N.Z. Advisory Committee.
4. The Nuffield Foundation, London, has approved grants for 1963; consequently it is too late for members to apply.
5. In future, as well as circularising the Directors, a notice will be sent to the Secretary of Agmanz.

Since 1951 the Nuffield Foundation has made available £5,000 a year for the support of research projects in New Zealand. To guide the N.Z. Advisory Committee the Nuffield Trustees have stressed :-

1. That "they hope that the Committee will recommend only such projects as are of a first class nature".
2. That "they are interested in the possibility of exploiting some of the resources peculiar to New Zealand".
3. That "they are interested in supporting projects which, because of their experimental nature, can only be set afoot with money such as that provided by the research fund".

The Secretary of the Nuffield Foundation has added :-

"Although the Foundation's interest in biology, interpreting the term biological in a wide sense, continues, it would be quite ready to consider a recommendation for a project in another field if your Committee heard of a good scheme which it considered worthy of support".

Dr. Corbett has added :-

"While the Nuffield Trustees are more interested in supporting mechanistic rather than purely taxonomic studies, the N.Z. Advisory Committee would be prepared to consider any first class project referred to it. Archeological research is certainly eligible for a Nuffield Grant. The Fund is for "frontier research", and grants would not be available for museum exhibitions".

The Nuffield Trustees' preference for mechanistic studies is disappointing, for while mechanico-chemical studies have produced remarkable progress in our understanding of processes such as photosynthesis, they are known to be unsuitable for many of the problems of biology, such as speciation. The need to restore

taxonomy was mentioned in Newsletter 13 last year and the views of Professors B. Commoner, Niels Bohr, W. M. Elsasser and Sir Cyril Hinshelwood were noted.

Mechanistic studies that are not grounded on a firm basis of taxonomic studies are like a house built upon the earth without a foundation. Recently I have examined most of the chemical studies of native plants published since 1900. They purport to be studies of plant species, but the sampling of each population is inadequate. Frequently the sample is a single flask of leaves, bark or flowers. In most studies there is no statement that a botanist has examined and named the plant, or that the author has placed a voucher specimen in a herbarium where later workers may refer to it. This is most necessary for variable species of genera such as Coriaria and Coprosma. Similar criticisms apply to mechanistic studies in the fields of plant ecology, physiology, genetics and cytology.

The restriction of the Nuffield Fund to frontier research is also disappointing. I raised the question of exhibition as the interpretation of scientific studies has become a problem. A quote from Newsletter 10 will explain our difficulties :-

"The number of new scientific journals is increasing at the rate of 1,000 a year or 3 a day. The number of scientific articles in the biological sciences, other than medicine and agriculture, is between 150,000 and 250,000 a year. To read all these papers is impossible. To find those papers relevant to a particular problem is difficult. Biological abstracting services in the U.S.A. abstract and classify a great number of articles each year, but cannot cope with the flood.... What has this to do with the Association? Members perform a useful service in reading articles in their particular fields, condensing bulky information, and presenting new ideas and discoveries in displays. This scrutiny of current research is not mere bibliography. Erwin Chargaff remarked recently that we live in a time that is drunk with experiments - dubious results, dubiously paralleled, serve to establish so-called facts with a celerity that would make a monkey blush. Under these conditions, Museums have ever-increasing problems to maintain the standards of their exhibition. Personally, I think that Galleries and Museums can provide an important service to their communities in interpreting new discoveries and ideas, but for the service they need trained staff and funds".

Unfortunately the Nuffield awards are not available to help us.

In 1956 a committee of the Royal Society of New Zealand furnished a report on National Collections and recommended that an attempt should be made to secure adequate funds for the attraction and support of sufficient staff to maintain existing collections, add to them, monograph different groups of N.Z. plants and animals, etc. From a rapid survey of recent annual reports it is clear that the number of scientific staff at the four main museums with national collections has not increased to any extent since 1956. Only ten or so members are qualified to apply for Nuffield awards and all of them seem to be heavily loaded with administrative duties and large collections. At present the Auckland, Canterbury and Otago Museums have major programmes to equip and enliven a variety of new display halls, lecture theatres and research rooms. The situation is dangerous in that it does not permit a maximum interest in scientific research on the part of those members who have the capability and training to do scientific work. What is the gap between the number of scientists on the staffs of the four larger Museums and the number required? According to my crystal ball if another ten scientists were appointed it would be just about enough to fill existing vacancies and cover replacements without allowing for any long term expansion of the number of active scientists. Clearly the Nuffield awards cannot be used to supply trained research workers for our larger Museums and are not the answer to the problem.

Robert Cooper,

Hon. Secretary.